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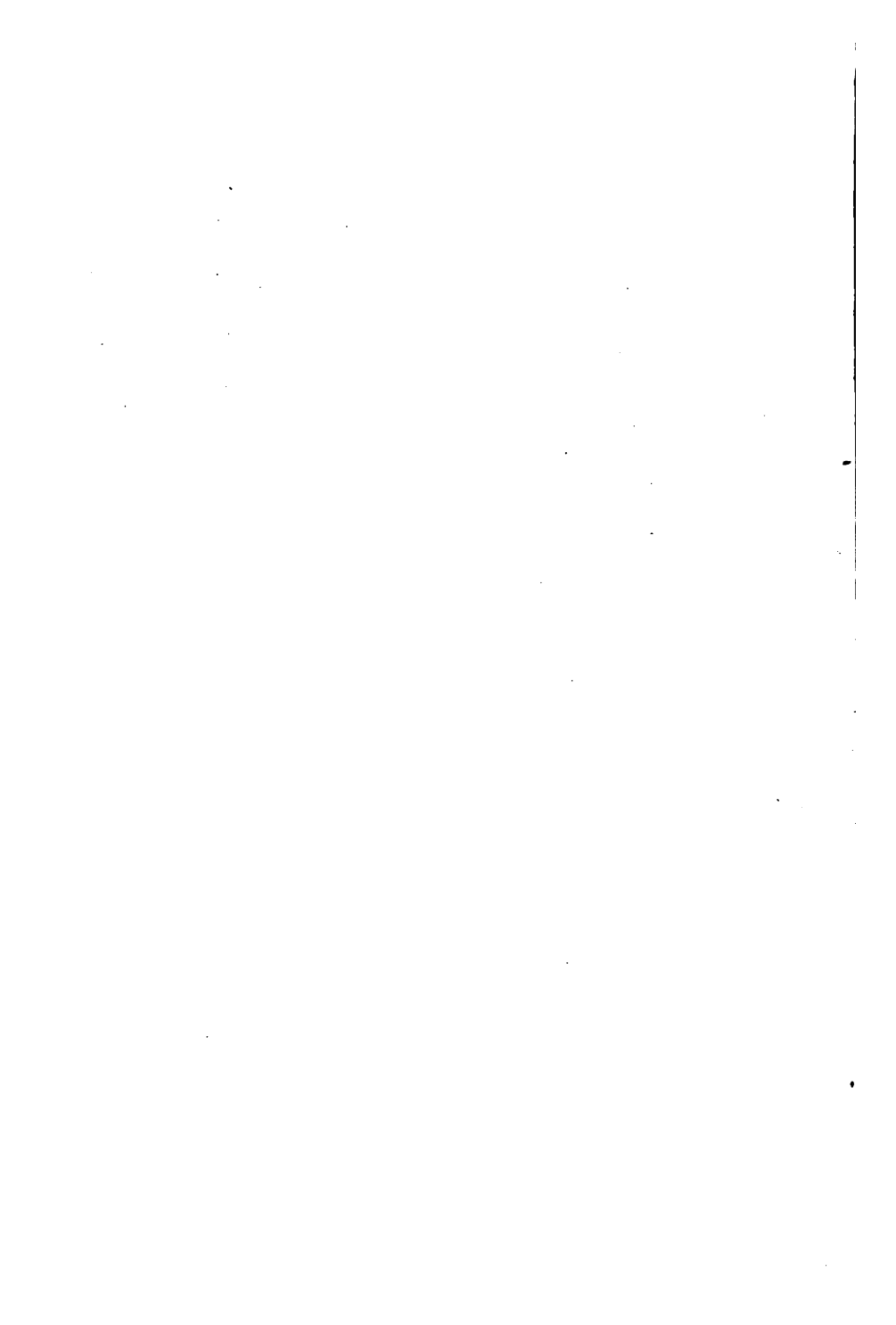
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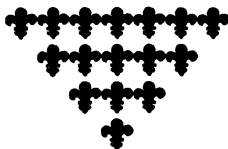
# The Real Chinese Question

*By*

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*Author of "The Real Chinaman," etc.*



YOUNG PEOPLE'S MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

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*Prof. Ludolphe Altrocchi*

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## PREFACE

THAT is a charitable rule of life which bids us take every man at his best. It is, however, wiser and safer to study each individual as thoroughly as circumstances will permit, and then to strike a balance between good and evil traits of character, accepting the result as a basis for judgment and action, so far as he is concerned. The same rule may be broadened with safety, and applied to nations or races. If, in such use, it serves no other purpose, it will, at least, act as a corrective to ignorant prejudice, and to that most common fault, prejudgment.

There is much force, and a wide range of applicability, to that French saying: "*Les absents ont toujours tort*," the absent are always in the wrong. Their story is seldom fairly told, the motives and causes which led to any particular conduct are seldom brought into a plain light, and judgment goes against them by misrepresentation or default. This rule of common practice is, also, not less applicable to nations and races than to individual members of the human family.

The Chinese, whether the term be used as referring to persons of the race, or to the nation, or to the government of the nation, have suffered enormously from it. They have been "the absent" in the past. And one has only to glance at the columns of the daily press, or to read some more serious articles in magazine literature, to realize how closely the French quotation applies to them. Any statement, any tale, however incoherent, absurd, grotesque, or self-contradictory, is accepted, if it only be applied to the Chinese. The Travels of Gulliver, fairy tales, and the Wonderful Adventures of Mother Hubbard's Dog all sink into the most insipid and unexciting, matter-of-fact prose when brought into contrast with current stories about the Chinese.

It is not merely in the tales and fictitious descriptions, such as may serve to while away an idle hour, that they have suffered, and that wrong has been done to them. In matters of the gravest importance, in those upon which turn the issues of peace or war, upon which national existence may hang, the Chinese have been "the absent," and have been judged and found guilty, either upon no statement, or the enemies' statement, of their case. For until recently, at least, the Chinese have also been silent. They have been

unable, or have not cared, to defend themselves or maintain their cause before the great Western world of thinking men and women. They have failed to recognize the power which this body holds to control and direct the actions of governments, and which it has been known, upon occasion, to exercise. Hence, everything has gone against them.

Ry way of example, it is not possible to believe that if the fair-minded and generous-spirited men and women of Great Britain had been accurately and plainly informed of the facts; if they had known what ruin was being wrought upon the Chinese; if they had been made at all familiar with the arguments, protests, and appeals of the Imperial Government, and with its bitter opposition; if they had understood the infamous purpose for which British soldiers and British ships of war were sent to China, and used there, and blood was shed, and lives wasted—if they could have been made to see all these things, it is not possible to believe that their government would have been allowed to persist in the opium traffic, and to work such a cruel wrong upon China. But China was “absent.” And China was silent when she should have appealed to a larger audience than the ministers, who cared little for

appeals and protests; she should have appealed to a power higher than the Throne, to the power behind it.

Chinese statesmen have been fond of saying that "China is a slumbering dragon." Of late China has been, not that, perhaps, but a dragon not fully awake to his danger and the necessities of his condition. Long outside the whirl of modern life, but being gradually drawn within it, he has neither adjusted himself to the situation nor realized its demands. And he can only complain in a language which the world does not understand.

Too much has been written about China from a purely foreign standpoint. The shelves are full of books—notably English—telling with great detail and much ingenuity what China wants, what China desires, and what is best for China, with the sole object of promoting the interests of British commerce, and thwarting the possible designs of Russia, and every other Power. But regarding what China needs, *for China's sake*, the world of literature is markedly silent. It hardly need be said that volumes, written either in defence or elaboration of some foreign policy, are seldom or never just and fair to the Chinese. They are not written in order to describe how the natives of the empire feel, what they desire,

nor what they say. Nor are they written to give broad and general views of any question from the native standpoint, as well as from that of the foreigner. Upon the contrary, everything is focused down to a single point of view, and that of foreign interest and profit.

The result is most unfortunate, as the present situation must plainly show. A cyclone, a volcano, an earthquake, or by any other fearful name that it may be called, has suddenly burst into terrible activity in the Chinese Empire, accompanied with horrors and agonies which no man dare describe. Tens of thousands of unoffending men and women and helpless children have been slain. Millions upon millions of money have been wasted in brutal riot, and as much more in the effort to suppress it, and none can yet see the end. The continued existence of China as a nation hangs quivering in the balance.

And yet, in these days of quick communication and, what may be termed, universal information; when everybody is supposed to know everything; when every nook and cranny of the world have been invaded and explored; when floods of books and avalanches of newspapers cover the earth, telling everything that is true and much that is not; when the contents of this globe have ceased to be matters of speculation, and men have turned



their eyes to Mars and other planets—in such times as these, in the presence of such a hideous catastrophe as the uprising of an immense race of men in frenzied defiance of all Western nations, the great masses of the most intelligent and best-informed in those nations are gazing at each other in astonishment, wondering what has been the cause of it all.

Whereas, any fair knowledge of events and influences at work in China during the past sixty years, knowledge which involved even a moderate acquaintance with the Chinese side of the history, no less than the foreign, would cause wonder, not at the outbreak, but that it had delayed so long. Better than that, such just information would have prevented the outbreak, by destroying the cause.

It is the purpose of this volume to bring before the thoughtful and fair-minded public some portions of the history referred to, and to explain certain forces and influences which operate in China to give those who may read it an opportunity to realize how certain events and certain lines of Western policy must have appeared to and have affected the Chinese. In doing this, it may help to furnish a wiser and safer basis for judgment and decision of the real Chinese question.

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## PREFACE

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The volume apologizes for and defends no one, least of all the Chinese. It states facts, some of which are painful and humiliating, but which ought to be stated, and which are neither exaggerated nor overdrawn. It appeals not for China, but for fair play.

CHESTER HOLCOMBE.

September 15, 1900.



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# The Real Chinese Question

## CHAPTER I.

### SOME SERIOUS MISTAKES.

It is a trite remark that ignorance is a prolific source of trouble. Views and opinions of men or races, which are based upon little knowledge and much imagination, may be harmless in works of fiction, but become dangerous when made the basis of intercourse and practical relations. Mutual misjudgment, injustice, and enmity are the inevitable results.

It is easier to call the Chinaman a heathen than to understand him. That he has eyes queerly shaped and located, eats with chopsticks, dresses his hair into a queue, and wears his shirt outside of his trousers, are held, by the large majority of people, to furnish ample grounds for the application of this offensive term. Yet he neither shaped nor placed his eyes, our own ancestors



braided their hair and wore it, as he does. And the relative arrangement of the garments named is not a matter of either morals, intellect, or religion. Thus this petty abuse of him is largely the result of ignorance.

In graver affairs, misconceptions of the Chinese, mistaken views of their attitude, and consequent erroneous judgments and conduct toward them, are responsible for a large part of the friction and conflict between them and Western nations. They are not credited with the possession of the same spirit, motive, and feeling which animate and control the rest of the world. They are, only too frequently, neither granted the same rights, nor accorded the same privileges. The same measure of forbearance and consideration is not allowed them as is conceded to others. Governments, acting upon lines of purely selfish purposes, object to, and at times have overcome by force, the selfish or patriotic opposition of the Chinese. Some men and some governments are reckless and indifferent to ultimate results, so long as their immediate purpose is effected. But the masses of the people are disposed to be fair-minded, and have no desire to injure China for the sake of their own advantage. More than this, they are sufficiently wise to accept, as an invariable truth, the statement that no wrong done

to one individual or nation can be to the permanent advantage of any other.

It is important to-day, as never before, that misapprehensions should be removed, false impressions corrected, the truth told, and the Chinese Government and people be better understood. Ignorance is too expensive and unwise to be longer indulged in. There are many common points of contact and interest which a right mutual understanding will bring to light. Fairer judgments, and increased respect, will do more to promote all proper forms of intercourse and commerce than men-of-war and dynamite. And the Western world can best aid China to understand it, by means of an honest effort to understand China.

It is a mistake to suppose that the empire is in a condition of chronic misrule and anarchy. While there are infrequent local disturbances and uprisings, caused by the action of incompetent or tyrannical local officials, superstition, or ignorance, the empire, as a whole, is quiet and peaceable. It is crowded with a great multitude of cities, towns, and villages, to which are allowed large measures of self-control, and which are orderly and well regulated. The Chinaman is not groaning under recognized burdens, nor struggling against an unwelcome tyranny. Whatever

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## 4 REAL CHINESE QUESTION

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may be the defects of his governmental system, he is himself responsible for them. He is quite well aware of this fact, and never objects to the system, though he may, at times, rise in protest against what he considers as abuses, or laxity in the administration of it. In the long centuries during which it has been in existence, he has either shaped himself to it, or it is the natural outgrowth of his character. Whichever it may be, the genius of his government meets with his entire approval.

In point of fact, the Chinese are governed less than almost any nation in the world. So long as they pay their taxes, and violate none of the requirements of the moral code, they are not disturbed by the authorities. A thousand and one official inspections, interferences, and exactions, common everywhere in America and Europe, are quite unknown in China. Some of them might, perhaps, be wisely introduced, but the Chinaman has never been guided, vexed, or harassed by them. He is, by nature and education, obedient to law and fond of good order. The teachings of Confucius, and the sacred edicts of the wise Emperor, Kang Hsi, both taught everywhere and to every subject, have had an immense and valuable influence in this direction. In evidence of the law-abiding disposition of the Chinese, let the

fact be noted that, in the face of an intense and universal anti-foreign feeling, foreigners have for many years travelled alone and unprotected into every part of the empire, and have, almost invariably, met with politeness, civility, and kind treatment. If a correspondingly bitter hatred of Chinese existed in the United States, how long, and to what extent, would it be prudent or safe for any of them to roam through our large cities and rural communities? Another fact, not sufficiently well recognized, furnishes evidence in the same direction. The Chinese immigrants to this country belong almost exclusively to the lowest class of their people, and are familiarly described, in their own land, as being, each, "half fisherman and half pirate." Yet a careful examination of the criminal and police records of any city in the United States will show a smaller percentage of disorderly Chinese—smaller in proportion to the total number of residents of that race—than of any other foreign nationality which is to be found among us.

The Chinese are not lethargic, incapable, nor indifferent. But they insist, unreasonably perhaps, upon looking at all things through their own eyes, studying them in their own way, and deciding for themselves, whether they are of value or worthless to them. Their systems,

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social, political, and economical, were settled, fully adjusted, and crystallized centuries ago. Ours are subject to almost daily alteration and development. Possibly it should not be expected that they adopt ours, without inquiry or hesitation, when they see us so ready to discard them for any others which are new or untried. Then their modes of life are more simple and quiet than ours. They abhor the ceaseless and exhausting whirl which "men of the West" call life. In other words, they criticise it very much as would the grandparents of the present generation, if suddenly thrown into the midst of it.

At the same time, the Chinese readily recognize the superiority of Western ideas and ways in some directions. They keenly resent any attempts to instruct or direct them. But they are quite ready to ask advice when they desire it, only reserving the right to digest and use, modify, or reject it, from their own point of view and by their own judgment. They will not allow foreigners to regulate or adjust matters for them. They are determined to do, whatever is to be done, for themselves and to their own advantage.

And just here the Chinese and the majority of foreigners who have any interests in the empire are working at cross purposes. Constant friction and much angry feeling are the results. The

Chinese believe that the foreigners are seeking to explore, exploit, and reconstruct the empire, solely for foreign profit and advantage. They will never assent willingly to any such line of action, and will continue to obstruct it by every possible means in the future, as in the past. People of the United States, or any other land, have only to ask themselves how they would feel under such efforts of any body of foreigners, efforts persistently and openly pushed, to understand Chinese sentiment upon the point. Such is, beyond question, the animating motive of the great proportion of all foreign attempts made for the development of China. The fact is well and commonly recognized. It is hardly reasonable to expect any great amount of sympathy with such a motive from the race which is to be exploited and explored, nor any unusual adaptability to such a scheme. And when a limited amount of exploitation and development have been accomplished, and the Chinese have been able to divert the results from foreign pockets and treasuries into their own, there arises the childish and absurd complaint that "the opening up of China is mainly for the benefit of the Chinese." Why should it not be? Yet sensible and intelligent men utter the cry, and write columns and pages in newspapers, magazines, and books,

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in censure of their own and the Chinese governments, because such undesired and unexpected results have followed their schemes.

The Chinese are not children, and it is a mistake to look upon or treat them as such. Few courses of action will more quickly provoke intense hostility, than attempts to gain a purpose by means of a trick or subterfuge, or by taking advantage of their ignorance in any way. A bit of history will illustrate this trait of character. Something more than twenty-five years ago, a number of foreign men of business in Shanghai, anxious for the construction of railways in China, and believing that the objections of the officials and people would disappear, if they had any opportunity to see and test the value of such a mode of transportation, decided to construct a model line from Shanghai to Woosung—a distance of twelve miles. Their purpose was as laudable as their methods were unwise. Having organized a company and secured the necessary capital, they applied to the Chinese authorities for a permit to build a *horse* railroad over the proposed route. After considerable hesitation and much correspondence, the permit was issued, it having been made particularly plain upon both sides that only animal power could be used. The employment of steam was specifically forbidden. Yet it was

the purpose of the promoters of the scheme to construct a narrow-gauge steam road, and this they proceeded to do, in spite of their repeated pledges to the contrary. They knew well that there was neither one Chinese official nor subject in the empire who would be able to detect the trick which was being played, by any peculiarities of construction. Only when the steam locomotive was seen, could they tell the difference between it and a horse, and discover the imposition of which they were the victims. The foreigners interested believed that their powers of persuasion, and the force of an accomplished fact upon the official mind, would then protect the railway from destruction. They evidently knew but little of the temper of the Chinese.

The survey of the contemplated route provoked a mob which was promptly suppressed, and the most cordial assistance was rendered by the authorities at every step in the progress of the construction. But when the line was ready and the locomotive, which had been quietly smuggled into Shanghai in parts, and put together in secret—when the locomotive made its appearance, the storm broke. Indignant and angry protest after protest was made by the local Chinese officials, and by the Imperial Government at Peking. The feeling was all the more intense because the ap-



plication for permission to construct the line, and the resulting correspondence, had been made and carried on through official channels. Thus at least two consuls-general were parties to the deceit, and, in Chinese eyes, their governments through them.

The Chinese authorities were much too cautious and timid to do what would have been done elsewhere, to tear up and remove the line. Everything short of that summary and well-deserved act was done. The populace were, if possible, more excited than the officials. Mobs were organized, and when these were with difficulty suppressed, bridges and portions of the roadbed were secretly destroyed. When these were efficiently guarded at all points, then misguided but patriotic Chinamen threw themselves under the wheels of the trains when in motion, hoping, by such suicide, to arouse the nation to a higher pitch of resentment against Western trickery and outrage.

In the meantime all foreigners, except British subjects, foreseeing the storm, had quietly sold their interests and withdrawn from the ill-devised venture. Thus the diplomatic management of the business was left to the government of Great Britain. After months of angry discussions at the capital, the British Minister was at

length forced to order the operation of the line to cease, as it was becoming a more and more serious menace to all foreign interests at Shanghai. After further wrangling, the Chinese Government, hopeless of settling the question in any other way, offered a liberal sum in purchase of the road, which was accepted by the British authorities. The latter stipulated, however, as a condition of sale, that the line be reopened, and operated for a term of one year. This requirement was carried out in good faith by the Chinese. But on the day when the term expired, the work of destruction began. Every portion of roadbed, equipment, and rolling stock was removed, placed on board ship, and carried to the island of Formosa, where it was thrown upon the seabeach and left to destruction.

The Chinese authorities in this manner, with much moderation and at no small expense, marked their intense indignation at being played upon like children, and being chosen as victims of subterfuge and trickery. And this wretchedly advised course of action, taken by foreigners who had spent their lives in China and yet had learned nothing of the Chinese, delayed the introduction of railways to the empire for a considerable number of years.

By the same treaties which authorized foreign

commerce with China, certain restrictions were placed upon it. A number of sea and river ports were specified within the limits of which alone foreign merchants might reside and transact their business. These have come to be called the "open" or "treaty" ports of China. The number of these points has increased from time to time, but the restrictions and regulations which confine foreigners to them have never been substantially modified. On the other hand, in these same treaties, the Chinese Government was coerced into the concession of certain curtailments of its natural rights as an independent power. It assented to a maximum rate of five per cent. duty *ad valorem* upon exports and imports. As the government maintains a complicated and uncertain system of inland taxation upon merchandise, it was also forced to agree that an additional rate of two and one-half per cent., paid at one time and called "transit duty," should cover all inland taxes upon foreign goods sent into the interior, or native products bought in the interior, and intended for export to any foreign country.

As was to have been expected, these agreements have been the fertile source of constant trouble and dispute between the Chinese authorities and merchants upon the one hand, and all

foreign governments, with such of their people as are interested in Chinese commerce, upon the other. A diplomatic quarrel regarding the scope and proper interpretation of certain words and phrases which are found in the treaties has raged continuously for forty years. The Chinese seek to narrow the meaning of the disputed terms within their reasonable intent. The foreign officials seek, only at times possibly, to broaden them beyond any legitimate construction. Keeping pace with this particular war of words runs a general skirmish. There is a constant demand, made by foreign governments, for the removal of restrictions, some of which are manifestly unlawful, for increased facilities for trade, and for the correction of abuses and punishment for violations of the treaties. These last are the work of local authorities and petty tax collectors. They are of constant occurrence, and are intentional and outrageous. No commerce, however prosperous, could exist permanently under them.

Yet it is only fair to look at the Chinese side of the whole question. It must be admitted that the restrictions named above were necessary to the continued existence of foreign commerce. Without them it would soon have been strangled by excessive and frequently repeated taxation. Yet, at the same time, it must also be admitted

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that these limitations upon native authority were well calculated to prevent any healthy growth of trade. This is evident from three separate points of view. In the first place, no government will give any other than the narrowest possible interpretation to treaty promises which have been exacted from it by force, and which are a distinct interference with its inalienable right of sovereignty. And no government, unless it be that of the angels, will view with any degree of favor, or encourage, save upon a demand backed by force, any enterprise which is protected by foreign powers, at the cost of its own humiliation and disgrace. Oriental governments have memories and are at times vindictive, like those of the Western world.

In the second place, these treaty restrictions upon the free action of the Chinese authorities force them to discriminate against their own people and products. Native goods, owned by a foreigner and destined for export, can only be taxed at inland points to the extent of two and one-half per cent. *ad valorem*. The same goods, if native owned, or bound for the same port and not destined beyond sea, in passing over the same route, may be taxed to any limit that the needs of the government, or the rapacity of the local collector, may see fit to enforce. Again, foreign goods, if

foreign owned, passing inland to a final sale and destination, cannot be taxed to exceed two and one-half per cent. *ad valorem*, in course of transit. The same goods, if native owned, or native goods in competition with them, going the same journey to the same market, are liable to any duty or exaction *en route* which may be inflicted. These discriminations are all against native merchants and native merchandise, and are directly calculated to drive both out of the market. Again, what government, except it be that of the angels, could be expected to regard with favor, or to foster with open hand, a commerce thus protected solely in the interest of aliens?

In the third place, the conditions under which foreign commerce was established and is carried on are a serious interference with the revenues of the government. So far as the entire body of foreign export and import trade is concerned, there is no flexibility or power of adjustment left by which the government may regulate the income from that source in accordance with its needs. No matter what exigencies and consequent demands upon the treasury must be met, no help can be looked for in that direction. It fluctuates in amount only as the commerce upon which it is levied shows gain or loss. And the total sum derived from it is unquestionably much

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less than it would be if there had been no forced commutation of the inland taxes, as described above.

The revenue from foreign commerce has been for some years practically exhausted in the payment of the principal and interest of foreign loans, made necessary by the heavy and repeated indemnities demanded of China, by expenditures for the military and naval defence, for a diplomatic and consular service, and other modern innovations. The war with Japan and the heavy payment exacted by the terms of peace made it necessary to raise sums of money far beyond the capacity of the foreign revenue. The *lekin* tax, which is mainly apportioned to the payment of provincial expenses, was therefore pledged as security for a further foreign loan. The result of this action upon the people and its influence in bringing the Boxer movement to a head are mentioned elsewhere.

It is a grave mistake and an injustice to the Chinese to attribute their opposition to foreign improvements to bigotry and superstition. These influences have some slight weight with the lower and more ignorant classes. An unreasoning hatred, contempt, and fear of everything foreign has much more weight even with them. But in the educated and official circles, the sources

of opposition are far more respectable, and deserving of serious consideration. In nearly every line of modern development, China is wholly deficient in skilled workmen. The entire control, direction, and labor must be placed in the hands of foreigners, over whom the authority of the Imperial Government could extend only to the point of discharge from service. In other words, the Chinese must put themselves, practically without reserve, into the hands of strangers, accept advice, and expend large sums of money upon plans and works which they are too ignorant and inexperienced to criticise, take whatever may be the result, and call it good. Various unsatisfactory and disagreeable experiences in this way of doing things have rendered the authorities extremely reluctant, not to say opposed, to adopt it. Yet this is not the main ground of objection.

Perhaps no country was ever called upon to settle questions of labor and food supply under the same close and pressing necessities as those which have existed in China for centuries. The situation there has made such questions literally *vital*. The problem constantly pressed home to them for consideration and adjustment has been: How may a given amount of work be so divided and subdivided as to produce the barest needs of life to the greatest number of human beings?



They have studied it, government and people, never with success. They have never reached the point where, to millions of human beings, a day's idleness failed to mean a day's abstinence from food. And the indescribable and unmentionable horrors of famine, caused commonly by drought over large areas, and utterly inadequate means of transportation, repeated with sickening frequency, have indeed kept the poor and the starving always with them. It has made them the most marvellously economical people in the world. Writers may say almost what they please, with truth, regarding the dirt and filth to be found in Peking. And it will still remain true that there is no city in the United States in which all forms of garbage are so carefully and regularly gathered, removed, and put to suitable uses. It may readily be granted that this is not done as a sanitary measure. But the result is no less healthful if the work is done upon economical grounds.

It is the labor question which forms the basis of the most serious objections of intelligent Chinese, to the introduction of machine work and rapid transportation. It is not in the question whether the fears and arguments which influence them are valid or worthless. It is enough that they are operative and sufficient with them. It is simply impossible to convince them that a ma-

chine by which one man is enabled to do the productive labor of ten can be anything but a curse to a country in which, after the most patient division and subdivision, arrangement and rearrangement, there still is not to be found an amount of labor sufficient to clothe each subject in the meanest rags and to feed him with the cheapest food. What they need is not condensation of work, but expansion. They say, and justly, that men are cheaper in China than horses, mules, or donkeys. The writer has many a time hired an able-bodied Chinese to walk the towpath of the Grand Canal for a distance of one hundred and twenty miles, the man to return at his own charges, for the sum of about twenty-five cents in gold. And the more intelligent Chinese insist that what is needed in their empire is, not increase in the working capacity of the man, which a machine practically secures, but a sufficiency of work for the normal capacity of his unaided hands. Under their theory and belief, if by a machine one man is enabled to accomplish the labor of ten, then the other nine must suffer starvation.

Arguments addressed to them, based upon increased production and sales in wider markets, reach only deaf ears. The practical question of labor, and consequent food, for many millions of

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hungry men, women, and children, is far too eager and pressing to permit them to experiment in the line of any novel theories or schemes of, to them, uncertain issue. Foreign imports have, in many directions, lessened the sale of domestic products, and hence, to a corresponding extent, decreased the total of remunerative labor. Why then should they favor the increase of the foreign import trade? And since machine-made goods from abroad have already driven some of their people into idleness, pauperism and starvation, why should they, by the introduction of the machines themselves, still more rapidly and widely destroy their natural source of livelihood? Cheaper goods are of no possible advantage to a man who, being without labor, is unable to buy them. And they ask why it is that the United States, having, for wise reasons, shut out a flood of poor laborers who wandered there from China seeking for food, advises the introduction of machinery to China, thereby producing, according to their ideas, an increase in the pauperism there.

Two incidents will bring out Chinese views upon the whole subject in a strong and practical light.

In 1883, an American and an English firm, at the cost of about a million dollars in each case, had established extensive filatures, or machines

for reeling the threads from the silk cocoons, at Shanghai. The local Chinese authorities demanded that they be closed and removed upon the nominal pretension that the treaties conceded to foreigners no privilege to establish manufacturing industries of any sort within the empire. Their rights were strictly limited to the various lines of commercial operations. After the usual period of local discussion, the business was transferred to Peking for diplomatic arrangement. As their interests were identical, the United States and British ministers made common cause, and, together, argued the various points involved with the Chinese Cabinet.

Prince Kung, as the leader upon the native side, though not yielding the claim that foreigners were entitled, by the terms of the treaties, to engage in manufactures, wasted no time upon it, but went directly to the heart of the broader question. He insisted that, under existing conditions, it was impossible for his government to consent to the introduction of labor-saving machinery. They needed machines to make work, not to save it. And he said that any attempt upon the part of the authorities to introduce labor-saving devices, or their introduction by others, with the assent of the government, would be met with violent and riotous opposition from

the people, which might spread to a point where it would be quite beyond control. The millions of Chinese workingmen would not quietly submit to any further, and artificial, reduction of their means of support, which were already inadequate.

Referring to the case in point, Prince Kung said that in the silk district near Shanghai there were hundreds of thousands of old women and young children, too old and too young to perform harder labor, who earned from one to two cents (silver) each day, by reeling the threads from silk cocoons. They must work or starve, and this was the only employment for which they were competent. In the various silk districts throughout the empire, there were millions of the same class of Chinese engaged in the same industry, and also incapable of doing anything else. The introduction of machines for doing this work would force this immense and helpless class into immediate starvation. Serious petitions and complaints had been received from Shanghai, calling attention to the distress already caused by the filatures established there, and praying for relief. The government of China could not consent to any line of action which was directly calculated to deprive its people of their work and, hence, of their food.

The British Minister, at one point in the con-

versation, called the attention of the prince to the superior quality of the silk thread made by machines over that produced by hand labor, and gave this fact as the cause of the increase of the silk trade in Japan, where filatures were used, and the corresponding decrease in the industry in China. The minister evidently sought to play upon the well-known jealousy existing between the two nations. But the prince replied, somewhat stiffly but with all due courtesy, that that related to a class of questions with which his government never interfered. Those matters belonged entirely to the manufacturers and merchants, who were quite competent to deal with them. Doubtless, if they discovered that better silk, for example, was needed to meet the demands of consumers, they would provide a better quality. That was their own business, with which the government had nothing whatever to do.

It may be added just here, that the interest of the British Minister in these cases came to an early and abrupt termination. He received a peremptory instruction from London, directing him to drop the business and to make no further effort to protect the rights or the investment of the English merchants in the case. The reason given was characteristic, selfish, and wise, from

the standpoint of British interests. Her Britannic Majesty's Government did not desire to encourage the introduction of manufacturing industries into China, which, at some future day, might lessen the Chinese demand for British manufactured products.

The Peiho River, from Tientsin to a point near Peking, a distance of one hundred and twenty miles, forms a part of the famous Grand Canal of China. For centuries it has supported an enormous traffic, and furnished employment to a correspondingly large number of Chinese. When the government determined to construct a line of railway between the two cities named, a feeling of uneasiness was developed, not only among the boat population, but throughout the innumerable villages which line the river banks, and in which the main business is to supply the wants of the boatmen. The feeling grew as the construction of the road progressed, until it amounted to open and widespread riot. Sections of the line were torn up and some bridges were destroyed. Rebuilt, they were again demolished. This was no bigoted and superstitious uprising, nor was it, in any sense, an anti-foreign demonstration. The people simply feared a diversion of traffic from the river to the

railroad, hence a loss of employment, and consequent want and suffering to them.

A conference took place between the authorities and representatives of the boatmen and villagers. Perfect frankness and independence of speech were safely indulged in by the latter, quite as much as would be allowed in any democratic government. The authorities explained their purposes, assured the representatives of the people that no considerable quantity of business would be withdrawn from the river, and, in particular, gave pledges that certain of the most important classes of merchandise should continue indefinitely to be transported by the river route. This amicable adjustment having been reached, the rioters apologized for having created the disturbance and having "troubled the heart of the Emperor." They pleaded their anxieties in excuse. Their excuse and apologies were accepted, and they never troubled the road thereafter.

The incident is interesting from several points of view. It gives a striking illustration of the relations existing between the government and people, and shows them to be paternal rather than despotic. The trouble arose within easy reach of Peking, and the official who had control of the settlement was named, and sent from the capital



for that purpose, by the Emperor in person. The independence of thought, speech, and bearing upon the one part, the recognition of the rights of the people, and the justice of their grievance, and the spirit of conciliation and forbearance upon the other, are not exceptional. The class of people among whom the disturbance originated is the lowest and the most ignorant to be found in China. Yet they were able to recognize a danger and to formulate a complaint upon intelligent grounds, and to present it in such manner as to secure respectful hearing and satisfactory pledges of protection. Such conferences between government and people and such conciliatory adjustments are not rare in China.

The Chinaman is, by nature, quiet, docile, well behaved, and very much given to the good habit of minding his own business. It is, however, nothing short of dangerous to infer, from the possession of these qualities, that he may be easily forced or driven. No race upon the earth can be more stubborn when angered, or aroused to what is believed to be a defence of its rights. Then he is capable of an unlimited, though sometimes passive, resistance. And, at other times, he is capable of any amount of determined effort and of self-sacrifice. No edict or decree of any emperor in Chinese history has been generally en-

forced by direct means if it failed to meet with approval or, at least, careless indifference. It might not be actively opposed, but would be evaded, ignored, and then allowed to die of neglect. It is probably true that there are a multitude of laws upon the books of government which must be obnoxious to the people, yet which are apparently of full force and are obeyed. But the Chinaman is expert in a system of balances and adjustments, and any careful study into the way and manner in which such a law is obeyed will speedily show that the obedience is nominal, and that in fact the statute is a dead letter.

It is a mistake to suppose that the Chinaman lacks keenness of perception, power to realize a wrong, or memory to retain the feeling produced by it. Upon the contrary, he is sensitive to a fault. And while he may have his own peculiar notions of indignity or outrage, and his own ideas of what constitutes suitable revenge, he is certain to demonstrate, soon or late, that he possesses the full average of human faculties in each of these directions. He cannot be handled with indifference, nor wronged with impunity. The will of the "man of the West" cannot be safely worked out upon him, in quiet disregard of his own inclinations and choice.

Nor is money an invariable panacea and heal-

ing balm for all the wounds and bruises which violence or accident may inflict upon the body or spirit of even the lowest type of Chinese. Here, again, they may have their peculiar notions and ideas. A trifling coin may atone for a kick or blow, while no available sum will heal the wound caused by a jeering or an insulting word. And it is not always safe to assume that when money is accepted in such cases, the bruise is reduced and the incident closed. The lowest of them, even the naked and loathsome beggars upon the streets, are keen to exact every mark of deference and respect given to gentlemen. As a rule, they freely concede to others what they exact for themselves. If refused, they have been known to take an ugly revenge.

Intelligent Chinese, in comparing themselves with Americans or Europeans, are rather fond of summing up the results with the phrase "ta t'ung, hsiao yi," or, to put it into plainer language, "like in essentials, unlike in ~~q~~important points." And this phrase correctly represents any just comparison of the Chinaman with the "man of the West." The former has frequently been called "the Anglo-Saxon of the Orient." And any reader who has followed carefully through the pages of this chapter cannot have failed to notice the fact that, so far as it described the peculiari-

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ties of the Chinese, it was also describing the characteristics of the American or Englishman.

Accepting this as a correct statement of fact, there can be but one wise or politic rule by which to shape our conduct toward the Chinese: *To treat them as we expect other men to treat us.*

## CHAPTER II.

### CHINESE CHARACTER.

ANY serious study of the Chinese nature is involved in perplexities and apparently insoluble conundrums. While a portion of these are superficial and disappear with a deeper insight and truer understanding, others are wrought into the fibre of the man. No amount of general knowledge of humanity, intimate acquaintance with the race, or close companionship with individual members of it, will enable an Occidental to predicate exactly what the Chinese will do under any given combination of circumstances. They are full of contradictions.

Nationally speaking, the Chinaman is a very old man, the oldest man in the world by very many centuries. Yet, with a fixedness of character, reaching in certain directions to absolute crystallization, he possesses the virility of young manhood and many of the mutually inconsistent traits of late childhood and early youth. Any

one who takes the Celestial to be a child will find him very much of a man. And any one who accepts him as a man will be astonished to discover the number of points in which he is a child. Men wonder at his ignorance of the fundamental principles of political economy. Yet the cardinal theories of Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill were fully expounded—and some of them exploded—by the Chinese more than twenty-five centuries ago. The clean-cut discrimination between productive and unproductive labor, between useful and useless wealth, was as well realized then as now. The theories of Henry George were advocated, put into operation, and proved utterly fallacious and worthless, by a prime minister of the Sung dynasty more than a thousand years ago. The importance of temperance was understood, and the man who discovered the process of manufacturing wine from rice was banished the empire more than forty centuries ago. Yet the Chinaman has never discovered the form of the earth, the natural cause of eclipses, nor the only proper and healthful relationship between the sexes. He is frightened by ghosts, burns counterfeit paper money to furnish support to his ancestors in the future state, and worships a bit of old iron as an infallible remedy for drought.

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Morbidly averse to change, he is yet radical in his ideas. While he speaks of the Emperor with bated breath, he is a true and sturdy democrat, and neither emperor, prince, priest, nor sword can compel his thoughts nor force permanent injustice upon him. He listens, with politely concealed indifference and dislike, to earnest and inappropriate exhortations from some diplomatic or consular official upon the beneficent results of a railway system in China, sees the selfishness underlying the remarks, and brightens at once into eager conversation over the cost of the buttons upon the lecturer's coat, or wonders why foreigners have never discovered the value of melon seeds as an article of diet. He is utterly callous to the advantages of telegraph lines. Yet, when he once decides to construct them, he threads them throughout the empire in an incredibly short space of time, and sees to it that each wire goes into some government office, thus creating an unnoticed but efficient espionage of every word which passes over them. He neglects and disbelieves in railway construction until all the world wonders, and then plans lines which, in a decade, will supply all the more serious needs of the entire country. He is at once the slowest and the most rapid of men.

While upon this point, it is only fair to point out that much of the intense conservatism of the Chinese and of his so-called insensibility to the manifest advantages of foreign improvements is, in fact, due to obstinacy. He has been so bored and overwhelmed with advice, all interested, as he believes, and coming from those whom he has been led to believe were his inferiors, that he has been nauseated with the whole subject, has apparently declined to see advantages which were patent to him, or has raised questions, as his diplomatic way of resenting an impertinence or of intimating that he understood the selfish motive underlying the apparently disinterested advice. Like other men, the Chinese have a strong desire to manage their own affairs in their own way. And they are intensely sensitive to anything like foreign interference. The Prime Minister, Wen Hsiang, once remarked to an urgent and gratuitous adviser: "China will build railroads when she is ready, and when she once begins, the work will be done with a rapidity that will astonish the world." A more recent incident may serve to illustrate another point just mentioned. A distinguished English gentleman made a semi-official call upon a more distinguished Chinese viceroy. After enlarging at great length upon the unsatisfactory



condition of British trade, and asking the viceroy whether as a patriotic man he was not nervous over the prospects of China, he proceeded to suggest that if the British Government were requested to reorganize the Chinese army under British officers, it might, under certain conditions, accept the task. It is quite unnecessary to put one's self into the place of the viceroy to imagine his feelings under such language and such a proposition. It was, however, far from his thought to resent the impertinence with the direct and brusque speech which would have been the instant act of an Occidental. He was quieter in his reply, yet far more keen. After expressing his sympathy with the speaker in his remarks, and deep gratitude for them, he gently inquired whether it might not be possible to employ American and Japanese officers as well as British. If foreigners, and especially foreign officials, in their dealings with the Chinese, would remember the wise saying, everywhere current in Western lands, "Never give advice until it is asked," much of the apparent stolidity and dense conservatism credited to these Orientals would soon disappear.

For the Chinaman looks out of the narrow slits of his almond-shaped eyes with a far broader, more sensible, and practical view of

things than that with which he is commonly credited. And yet, at the same time, his angle of vision is so acute that he often gets the most absurd opinions. There is no more perspective in his ideas or views of life than in the pictures which he paints. He is capable of making clean-cut and nice discriminations, and very fond of doing so. Indeed, he is a natural-born hair-splitter. But he is frequently a wrong judge of values, and his scale varies widely from that universally accepted elsewhere. Possessing a high standard of morals, and to a considerable extent living in accordance with it, he yet places refinement of courtesy and manner upon a higher level, and condemns a breach of etiquette more sternly than a lapse from virtue. Fine penmanship is of greater importance in his system of education than a knowledge of sciences or mathematics, and elegance of diction is more to be desired than correctness or originality of thought. The latter he is inclined to frown upon. In many respects he is a most fanciful theorist. He seeks impossible means of producing rain at will, strives to keep it on tap, as it were, rather than the practical methods of preventing famine as a result of drought by providing easy and rapid means of intercommunication and food transport. He paints or embroiders

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tigers green and camels blue, and provides toy specimens in those colors for his children, not because any such creations exist, but because such distortions of nature please his æsthetic eye.

Upon the other hand, he is a close and logical reasoner. While many of his discriminations appear to be far-fetched and fanciful, yet, accepting them as a basis, his conclusions are natural, give evidence of mental balance and acumen, and are deserving of respect. Two matters of immediate interest may serve to illustrate this statement. In order to provide funds with which to pay the Japanese indemnity, the Chinese Government found it necessary to hypothecate the *lekin* tax receipts of the empire. This action has produced the most intense irritation among all classes throughout China, and has contributed seriously to produce the recent outbreak. There are two features of this irritation which may strike the reader curiously. It is not felt toward the Manchu government which gave this security, but toward the foreigner who exacted it. And the foreign customs revenue has repeatedly been pledged by the Chinese authorities to secure foreign loans without exciting ill-feeling or remark. Why this irritation in the one case and complacency in the other? And why should the popular resentment be directed

against the foreigners who accepted the security rather than against the authority at Peking which proffered it?

The answers to these questions may show a peculiar and over-nice discrimination, but they will also show a logical train of thought. The Chinaman has never regarded the foreign customs revenue as anything which belonged to him. No portion of it either came from or went into his pocket, and hence it did not concern him in the least. It was made up of sums of money which foreigners paid to the Emperor for the privilege of selling their foreign goods in China, or for the privilege of purchasing native goods to sell at home. Hence to hypothecate the foreign customs revenue was natural and proper. If the Emperor needed funds, the foreigners advanced whatever sum he desired, and retained each year a small portion of the money which they would otherwise pay him for trading privileges until the entire advance was cancelled. The transaction did not affect the people of China nor concern them in any way. But the *lekin* tax was quite another affair. It was the money of the Chinese people collected from their pockets by their authorities, for the expenses of the administration and protection of their interests. Their money was

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being taken and paid to foreigners. Here was double cause for anger. Not only was their money being diverted from its proper destination into the pockets of a hated class, but additional taxation would be necessary in order to carry on the government. And a bitter cry swept throughout the empire that the people were being taxed to pay the foreigners. It made no difference whatever that the *lekin* was only hypothecated, and that not a coin of it need leave China if the foreign loan could be met from other sources. The masses of the population cared nothing for such distinctions. That the excitement was directed against the foreigner rather than the Peking authorities is equally natural. The Chinese are experts in the science and art of money borrowing and lending, and quite understand all questions of security for loans. The Emperor was not at fault, as he was forced to give whatever security the lender demanded. But the demand of the lender for the *lekin* aroused their anger. It was a fresh effort of the foreigners to strip the Chinese. And the end of that anger has not yet come.

The second illustration is not less in point. Much contempt was heaped upon the Chinese soldiers during the recent war with Japan for their very indifferent fighting, and many broad

and sweeping generalities, complimentary neither to soldiery nor people, were indulged in. A corresponding degree of surprise is being expressed at present at the bravery, hardihood, and bitter fighting qualities shown by these same forces in recent battles with American and European troops. Why were they cowards then and brave now? The answer is near at hand, and it is all a matter of Chinese logic. The Chinaman, soldier or civilian, cares nothing for Corea or Manchuria. They constitute no part of "The Eighteen Provinces" which fill his conception of his native land. While he has no dislike of his Manchu sovereign except upon sentimental grounds, yet he does not care to fight his battles for him unless they are the battles of China as well. The Japanese war was regarded by the masses of the Chinese as a sort of personal difficulty between the Emperors of China and Japan over a country foreign to both. They regarded it, at first, with a great amount of philosophy, and only were seriously stirred when the current of war swept over to Chinese soil. Then it was too late. But their wrath has been rising continuously since, and they fight now because they believe their country to be in danger. The Emperor counts for little, but China is everything. Humiliated by Japan, terri-

tory seized by nominal friends—Port Arthur by Russia, Wei Hai Wei by Great Britain, and Kiao Cho by Germany—their *lekin* tax pawned to pay for the humiliation received from Japan, their distrust and suspicion of all foreigners have condensed into certainty and fear. Hence the Chinese is now a fighting man.

It is difficult to analyze the Chinese mental conformation down to what may be termed original characteristics. It is impossible to determine to what extent customs and rules of conduct, rigidly and uniformly enforced through more than a score of centuries, may have modified natural traits. He is too old. There lies too heavy a veneer of formality, etiquette, and propriety upon the surface to allow an accurate determination of the nature of the substance underneath. Then the question arises whether these rules of life, nowhere so precise, minute, and extensive as in China, have first shaped the man and then in turn been shaped by him, each acting and reacting upon the other, until all semblance of the original character of either has gone. Take the home life of the Chinese by way of illustration. He is very domestic in his tastes, yet appears not to be fond of his family. Of his sons, which his religious notions make necessary to his happiness in the future state, he always

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speaks in terms of contempt. The veneer is, however, so thin at this point as to render pride and satisfaction plainly visible beneath. But what of his feelings toward his wife and daughters? Are his indifference and masterful attitude toward them the natural, original growth of his character, or are they vicious grafts set there under false rules of life and fostered by inhuman theories? Has the Chinaman always believed that a woman has no soul, or is the wicked belief the outcome of wicked practice? The peculiar rules under which betrothals and marriages are arranged and celebrated render any affection between the parties immediately concerned impossible in advance of wedlock. And the degrading position of the young wife in the family of her mother-in-law renders suicide not uncommon, the growth of any respect and affection for her from her husband extremely rare, and exhibitions of these homely virtues quite unknown. Are these monstrosities of character natural to the Chinaman, or has a better disposition been dwarfed and distorted by vicious education?

Another class of similar questions furnish subjects for curious and fascinating study. Are many of the ideas, customs, modes of thought, and practices of the Chinese to be taken as the results of extreme age or of youth? Are they



the developments of a first or a second childhood? Is the intense superstition of the Chinese to be regarded as the religious idea gone to seed, or is it that idea in embryo? Is his intense *Chinese* feeling genuine patriotism not yet developed into its highest form, or is it that noble trait dried and shrivelled into mere affection for the spot where he was born? Is his marvellous economy the outgrowth of centuries of necessity, or centuries of greed, or is it childish ignorance of the fact that money is only valuable as a means?

The idea of filial piety, as held by the Chinese, and as regulated and determined by law, amounts to actual tyranny. Is this the unchecked growth, through many centuries, of the original proper feeling of respect and honor toward parents? Or is it, in its present form, the original idea which has never been restrained and brought into proper relationship to other duties and virtues? The Chinese form of government is essentially paternal despotism. Is this offensive form of the paternal theory a result of the old age of the empire? Or does it indicate a race of children who have never developed any theories of self-government? Ancestral worship may be called the original cult of the Chinese. Was it, at the dawn of the race, a

simple memorial service of affection and regard for the dead, such, for example, as the people of the United States observe annually at the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers? Has it grown from that into a form of idolatry? Or does it represent the religious idea of a race which, at the end of forty centuries, is still unable to distinguish between dead men and an eternally living Deity? Is their worship of heaven a degradation of an original worship of the Creator, or have they never yet grown old enough to find Him? Is there any connection, other than incidental, between the Chinese ritual of the worship of Heaven and the Mosaic ritual of sacrifice to Jehovah? The similarity between the two is so striking that some have been misled into a belief that they represent the same worship.

The Chinese have a strong natural sense of order, which has been developed to a remarkable extent. By rule and precedent everything has been brought within a well-defined, cut-and-dried system. They have strong, though sometimes peculiar, ideas of the fitness of things. Their flowers are trained and forced until each month of the year has its own special and particular complement of blossoms. They maintain, so to speak, a suitable balance of power

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between the spirits of their dead emperors by burying their bodies alternately at equal distances to the east and the west of the capital. Their ideas of the unfitness of consanguineous alliances are so extreme that two persons bearing a common surname are not allowed to intermarry. As there are but one hundred recognized family names in the empire, the effect of this rule is more serious than it would be in any other country.

No father may prostrate himself before his son, though the latter may be his emperor. Given names or informal and familiar modes of address must not be used between equals even in the case of brothers or lifelong friends. No degree of intimacy is held sufficient to justify it. Chinese music is probably the worst in the world. The time kept by the players is the best. All dwellings of the better sort must face the south. Pagodas must have an odd number of stories, and an odd number of days must elapse between a death and the burial of the corpse. Temples dedicated to the worship of the heavens, earth, sun, and moon are placed, respectively, at the south, north, east, and west of the capital of the empire. The altar whereupon sacrifice to heaven is made must be round, because heaven is round, and the corresponding altar to the

earth must be square, because, as the Chinese believe, the earth is square. Thus an autocratic, and often apparently automatic, rule of order and sense of fitness runs through everything which touches, concerns, or affects the Chinese life. It reaches to the most minute details, and the argument that such and such an arrangement or plan is disorderly, unfit, or irregular, no matter how trivial the point may be, is fatal to its acceptance. That delightful apparent disorder, often so acceptable to the eye and the taste, finds no supporters among the Chinese.

With the masses of the people, the explanation that such is the old custom is a quite sufficient explanation for any particular arrangement, practice, or rule of action. Yet the Chinaman has strongly developed reasoning faculties. He has his own ideas, and is quite fond of searching down to the bottom of things. He is much given to argument, as those who have conducted diplomatic business with him have found, sometimes to the great trial of their patience and good-nature. He has a reason for everything, which, given a little time, he will readily produce. If taken suddenly and unawares, he, promptly and with great composure, invents one. Among the educated and official classes of the Chinese there is found as high an average

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of logical and reasoning ability as elsewhere in the world. Though here that lack of perspective, over-acute angle of vision, and consequent distorted ideas of the comparative size and importance of various objects of thought, already mentioned, is not infrequently found.

An unfavorable and unjust idea of the mental acumen of the race often comes from the fact that in a battle of words a Chinese antagonist never brings up his strongest forces first. He plays with his enemy as a fisherman plays his fish. He advances one puerile argument after another, watching closely their effect, and only brings up his real army when all these men of straw have been demolished and cast aside. Sometimes he does not care to give his actual arguments at all. This is especially true when foreigners are his antagonists. And many of the ideas, current in Western lands, regarding the absurd notions and prejudices of the Chinese are due to this peculiar and unfortunate reticence. Half of the arguments reported abroad as operative in the Chinese mind to the exclusion of railways and other modern improvements are merely these straw words. They never found lodgment or were given serious weight in the minds of intelligent Chinese.

The ignorant lower classes are equally fond

of argument with their betters, and they, too, have a reason for everything. The absurdity of these reasons often reaches the grotesque. Yet they appear to give satisfaction to those by whom they are held, and a laboring man will sometimes establish quite a reputation for distinguished ability among his fellows by some sober yet nonsensical explanation of what is an insoluble puzzle to the rest. Thus a Chinese boatman at Shanghai, being asked why an eye was painted upon either bow of all native craft, promptly and gravely replied: "No got eye, how can see? No can see, how can sabee? No can sabee, how can makee walkee walkee?" (If it has no eye, how can it see? If it cannot see, how can it know? If it cannot know, how can it travel?) Thus again, a Chinese hotel-keeper having an impecunious American guest at an agreed price of one dollar a day, when six months had passed and no payment whatever had been made, voluntarily reduced the price of his guest's board to half a dollar each day in order that, as he explained, he should not lose so much money by him! A group of workmen stood intently watching the writer one day in the largest carriage builder's establishment in Peking, as he was clumsily engaged in placing a pair of springs upon a Pekingese cart. Such articles as springs

had never been seen before in the Chinese capital, and no workman would venture to put them in place. Conjecture was rife among the group as to the use of those strange-shaped pieces of metal, and many suggestions were made. At last the foreman of the establishment said: "Oh, I know! In foreign lands they have carriages which will travel without being drawn by any animal, and this contrivance which he is fastening upon the cart will make it go of itself." A satisfied grunt passed around the group, the foreman was admired and respected even more than ever, and doubtless the workmen astonished their neighbors by declaring that they had seen a foreign automobile.

The Chinese have a keenly sensitive æsthetic taste. Evidences of this fact are to be found in every direction and among all classes of people throughout the empire. Their canons of art vary so widely from those accepted in Europe and America as to reach direct opposition at some points. Yet they are keenly alive to the beautiful. Their love for the odd and the grotesque, in imitation or variation of nature, is more apparent than real, and is mainly shown in dwarf copies of natural objects of grandeur or beauty. This is the result of necessity rather than choice, and should be credited to a hunger

for the beautiful so keen that, in the absence of the originals, they can find pleasure in the merest toy copies. Hence all over China, in the homes of the poorest, as well as of the wealthy, in door-yards and dwellings, are to be found tiny landscapes, dwarf trees, mimic caves and grottoes, artificial rock work, and mountains of a few feet in height, threads of running water, or lakes that a child might spring across. All this is the struggle of poverty to surround and satisfy itself with the beautiful. As such it has a right to recognition and respect.

The family cemeteries, objects of special veneration and regard among the Chinese, are carefully laid out and adorned to an extent often far beyond the means of their owners. And the traveller will search through many lands, and visit the tombs of the distinguished dead in them all, before he finds a spot more fit for an imperial mausoleum than that lovely bowl, lying in the bosom of the Western Hills, beyond Peking, where, for six hundred years, have rested the ashes of the last line of Chinese rulers. Throughout the empire, hill slopes, mountain crags, and similar points commanding a wide range of vision, were chosen centuries ago as sites for their temples, pagodas, and other sacred and important edifices. The



writer stood one autumn day by a ruined building, placed upon the highest point in the Imperial Summer Palace, west of Peking. Upon every hand, marring what must once have been a landscape of exquisite beauty, were blackened, broken, and roofless walls and other marks of the desolation wrought by British and French troops when they plundered and burned this palace in 1860. Where the writer stood were to be seen a few Chinese characters recently written upon one of the posts of a finely wrought but broken archway. Translated, they read as follows: "A gentleman could not so far demean himself as to consent to the mutilation and destruction of this wondrously beautiful landscape."

Chinese literature furnishes innumerable evidences of high standards, in the main pure and true, in all the directions which literature can reach. In purity and grace of diction no writers of any age or race have excelled the Chinese. Few have equalled them. When the productions of some of the Chinese poets can be fittingly translated into a more familiar tongue, the writers will be recognized as entitled to a place among the few who have been able to condense infinite beauty into finite words.

The Confucian idea of correct living would

best be represented by the single word moderation. The typical human being is constantly referred to in the writings of the Chinese sage as "the mean man"—that is, as the man who avoids extremes of every sort. Moderation and dignity are the constituent elements of a Confucian gentleman. He never hurries, never gives way to excess, is considerate of the rights and prejudices of others, trusts much to mutual conciliation and concession, has, perhaps, less of manliness than manner about him, according to Western ideas, but is, in point of fact, a high and admirable type of manhood.

Such an ideal has, however, its own grave points of weakness. It centres man too much in himself. It cultivates conceit, laziness, and hypocrisy. It can never produce the more aggressive virtues, such as bravery, self-sacrifice, and unquestioning devotion. It prunes too much and nourishes too little. It is a theory for the student in his cloister rather than for an active, energetic man in the world and part of it. Confucianism has produced but few martyrs and no saints. It cannot appreciate the demand for any life more active, hearty, intense, and whole-souled than its own. The man who always walks thinks the runner a fool. And if he has been educated into the belief that a slow, digni-

fied walk is the limit of any decent, legitimate rate of progress, he soon and naturally becomes the bitter critic of any to whom a more rapid gait is necessary. To the Confucianist the modern driving man of business may not be a lunatic, but he is no gentleman, and an enemy to all that is proper and becoming.

Such as it is, the Confucian theory of life has dominated China for twenty-five hundred years. In all that time it has met with no serious continued opposition, been confronted with no rival theory which might check or modify its influence upon the people. It is impossible to overestimate its effect upon the character of the Chinese. Unquestionably, it elevated them far above the level of all surrounding tribes and races. It made them probably the most civilized race to be found, at one time, upon the earth. It appears to have fixed and fastened many of the quieter virtues permanently in the disposition of the Chinese. But it could only lift them toward its own level, and leave them there. And, in its effect upon the China of to-day, it has done what the bandages do to a Chinese baby's foot, shaped it according to the form and manner of antique ideas, checked the flow of life through it, and left it crippled.

Confucianism has thus operated as a constant

repressive force upon the natural tendencies and inclinations of the race. And it has worked out some peculiar and unfortunate results. It has made China a cyclone country, not as regards the action of the winds of heaven, but in rendering inevitable the sudden outburst of human passions. Patience, quietness, docility are virtues found to a remarkable extent among the Chinese. But human nature, the same in China as elsewhere, must have some outlet for the escape of superfluous energy and feeling. Confucianism furnished none. It was uniform, unvaried repression. And hence, nowhere else so sudden and dangerous, are seen in China those blind, inexplicable whirlwinds of frenzy. They occur in individual cases every day. The staid, decorous gentleman becomes a maniac in his rage over some matter so trivial as not to deserve notice. The difference of the twentieth part of a cent in the price of a fish, or of an ounce in the weight, will cause white-headed old gentlemen who have just been exchanging snuff, quoting Confucius, and paying compliments to each other, to foam at the mouth, hurl offensive epithets at the ancestors and female relatives of each, and strip for personal combat in the public street. All sense and reason are gone. The cases are not infrequent in which individuals

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commit suicide in order to revenge themselves upon the object of their wrath. Aged women, grandmothers, shout and scream themselves dumb, strip themselves naked, and rave in unmentionable words, all in the presence of a crowd of spectators, and all for the most absurd trifle.

These are individual, and comparatively harmless, cyclones of passion. It is when similar storms of rage affect masses of the people and sweep over great centres of population or wide areas of territory that results, sickening in their horror, are to be expected. Then the Chinaman is a beast, drunk, mad, and ferocious. Nothing is too horrible for him to conceive, too fiendish for him to execute. Gentle, and possessing but slight inventive faculty when sane, in his fits of frenzy he will invent and execute modes of cruelty and torture which would cause all the other human butchers of history to shudder.

Many of these cyclones of Chinese fear and wrath originate in some one or more of their superstitious ideas. A story gains currency that a spirit has been seen to drop a powder, pure white but deadly, into a village well. No one can be found who saw the act, no person has suffered from use of the water of that well. But this counts for nothing. In an instant,

sense, judgment, reason are all unknown forces throughout that entire region. All labor is suspended, the people huddle together like frightened sheep, vigilance committees are appointed, and any unfortunate stranger had better never have been born than to come within the grip of that raging mob of demons. A few days or weeks pass, nothing serious has happened to the people of the locality, the atmosphere gradually clears, and that cyclone is over. They are, however, seldom so harmless in their outcome.

The majority of the outbreaks, in which foreigners have suffered, have been produced by rumors of supernatural powers possessed by them and used to the injury of the Chinese. They were said to dig out the eyes of infants, which with other parts of the body were used in the preparation of a magic powder, which powder, given or even shown to a Chinese, would instantly deprive him of his will, and make him the slave of the foreigner. It was this preposterous lie that caused the Tientsin massacre of 1870 to sweep out of a clear sky and, in two and a half hours of violence, to bring horrible deaths to twenty-three foreigners, the majority of whom were devoted Sisters of Charity. So universal and persistent is the belief in this

stupid story of the use to which babies' eyes are put by foreigners, that let any person of that class pass along the street of a Chinese town or city, and the eyes of every baby whom he comes near will be quickly covered by the hands of the person having it in charge.

The habit of repression paves the way for grudge and grievance to be held and cherished in secret. These may exist and grow for years unsuspected beneath the bland and expressionless face of the Chinese, until some trifle, perhaps quite unconnected with the original complaint, brings the crisis and lets loose the storm. The Boxer movement must be explained in this way. To reach its source, one must go back sixty years, to the very beginning of any intercourse or association between Chinese and foreigners. To understand its power and momentum, the anti-foreign feeling, originated then, must be traced as it spread throughout the empire, and studied as it was fed by one incident after another, aggravated by a thousand mutual misunderstandings and genuine causes of complaint, deepened by actual and imaginary attacks upon the integrity and independence of the nation, broadened and widened by offensive airs of patronage and superior wisdom and inexcusable acts of injustice and wrong, until

this feeling reached the danger point at the close of the war with Japan. Then followed shortly thereafter the occupation of two small areas of Chinese soil by Great Britain, and one each by Russia and Germany. Still, the repressed anger made no sign. But the hypothecation of a native tax to secure the payment of the indemnity promised to Japan, or, as the Chinese regard it, the diversion of their money to the payment of Japan for an unprovoked and inexcusable attack upon their country—this apparently simple and routine business act furnished the friction which generated the electricity which let loose the whirlwind. Thus the Boxer movement! It represents the wrath and hate of sixty years' growth. It is the more violent because of these long years of repression. And it receives the hearty sympathy of many millions of Chinese who have taken no active part in it. For, beyond a doubt, it represents to them a patriotic effort to save their country from foreign aggression and eventual dismemberment.

The Chinaman is punctilious in the exaction and discharge of all the obligations of courtesy and polite breeding. He may borrow the necessary hat and coat, or pawn his undergarment in order to procure them, but he will not fail to pay or receive all visits of ceremony at the



proper time and in the conventional apparel. This is true, not merely of the educated class, but of the entire mass of the nation, from the prime minister to the scavenger and water-carrier. The disregard or indifferent observance of the ordinary forms of courtesy, so commonly seen among people of Western nations, has done much to produce the grossly erroneous opinions regarding those people which are almost universal in China. The brusque manner, hasty speech, and self-assertion of the American or European are all so many offensive barbarisms to the Chinese. And as these peculiarities are first noticed, they determine the judgment and destroy any wish to prosecute the acquaintance.

The Chinese are keenly exacting in all questions of individual right. They are irascible and quarrelsome in trivial matters. Yet they are, in the main, kindly and charitable in their relations with each other. The extent to which mutual assistance is rendered among the very poor is remarkable. They are, at least, not behind their fellows in other lands in this regard. They are generous and public-spirited, giving liberally to works of all sorts for the common good. Some of the finest stone arched bridges in the world are to be found in China, and a large number of them have been constructed by private indi-

viduals for the common use. It is no uncommon thing to see, erected at the approach of one of these works of public utility, a marble slab reciting the fact of its construction by some private subject of the empire for the service of all men. Nearly the whole of the innumerable temples, pagodas, and shrines found throughout China and dedicated to the service of one of the three religions, as well as all of the immense number of mosques scattered over the northern and western parts of the empire, are erected by private subscription. And the Chinese support their false religions with a liberality which might, perhaps, put to shame the professed believers in a truer faith.

The weaker side of the Chinaman is that of his good-nature. He will resent and refuse a claim or a demand, but gracefully yield in the same matter when shaped as a request or a favor. He is easily accessible at all points, excepting those which appear to touch his rights or his dignity. These he will often yield upon an appeal, but never in response to a demand. Few men enjoy more than he that feeling of complacency which arises from conferring a favor upon others and thus putting them under an obligation. He is susceptible to flattery, and easily led, but as difficult to drive as his own

mules. The success of any negotiation with him depends quite as much upon the manner and tact with which it is conducted as upon the character of the issue involved. He will yield, to his own hurt, if rightly approached; he will resist, to his own disadvantage, if indiscreetly urged. He is fond of finesse and delicate but indirect manipulation, and a master in these arts. He seldom takes the straight, open road to an end, but circuitous paths are his delight. The use of brute force is abominable in his eyes. He is charged with being an adept in all forms of deceit and falsehood. He is not untrained in these directions. But he would hardly win a prize, in a contest of tricksters, if representatives of the Latin, Spanish, Slavonic, Turkish, or Japanese races took the field against him.

With all the oddities, contradictions, and insoluble conundrums which the Chinaman presents to the student of human nature, he is a man among men, a man with a future, and must be counted and reckoned with as such. Whatever of truth there may be in Earl Salisbury's remarks concerning decadent races, they have no possible application to the people of the Chinese Empire.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE CHINESE LITERATI.

IN any estimate of the forces which lead and control public opinion in China, everywhere, from the knot of peasants in the hamlet to the highest officers of state and the Emperor himself, the literati, or educated class, must be given a prominent position. They form an immense body, increased each year by the government examinations. They are at the head of the social order. Every civil officer in the empire must be chosen from their number. They constitute the basis of an elaborate system of civil service, well equipped with checks and balances which, if corrected and brought into touch with modern life and thought, would easily command the admiration of the world.

With the exception of a few and unimportant proscribed classes, the pathway to membership in this order is open to all Chinese, upon equal

terms. Money or rank, theoretically at least, removes no bars, makes smooth no part of the road. The poorest peasant, no less than the prince or millionaire, has an attainable ambition placed before his son, which, if he will, he may follow until he becomes prime minister of the empire, "the right hand and the strong heart" of the Emperor. And the best proof that this is not mere theory is found in the fact that during many centuries the heads of the government, always excepting the Emperor, have commonly been the sons of poor, unknown parents.

Thus is constituted, as the brains and intellect of the Chinese nation, an immense and venerable literary aristocracy, organized and established fourteen hundred years ago, and continuous in its organization and control, down to the present time. It is more democratic than any class or social order in any other part of the world. It is a democratic literary aristocracy. This may appear a contradiction in terms, but all China is full of such and even stranger contradictions. Members of this order are found, not only in the great literary and political centres of population, but in every nook and cranny of the empire. That hamlet or village is esteemed of poor repute which fails to number one or more of the literati among its inhabitants. And every-

where they are the learned men, and are reckoned as the final authority upon all matters, whether of science, politics, morals, religion, or any other branch of thought or action. They originate, shape, and control public opinion. It would be difficult to overstate the respect in which they are held and the deference shown them everywhere and by all classes. They are the unofficial judges, the arbitrators in village or family differences, the disseminators of public news and commentators upon it, the authority in matters of etiquette and propriety, the leaders in feasts and amusements, the censors of morals, the writers and readers of letters for the illiterate, the teachers of the village schools. They draw contracts, business agreements of all sorts, and petitions to the authorities. They are the leaders of thought and action, the brains of the Chinese nation. Narrow-minded, ignorant by all the standards by which we gauge men, heavily tainted with innumerable forms of gross and absurd superstitions, with which all other Chinese are saturated, they constitute the intellectual force of the empire, and with them we must reckon when we seek to measure or to move that nation.

The course of study which must be pursued successfully to gain admittance to this venerable

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order was determined fourteen hundred years ago, and has never been modified or enlarged since. It takes no heed of the growth of human intellect. It ignores as practically impossible any widening in the range of human knowledge or development in science. Indeed, it goes beyond this, and maintains that the culmination of all wisdom was reached twenty-five centuries ago. For the subjects of study are substantially confined to the writings of the Chinese sage Confucius, who lived some five hundred years before the Christian centuries began. A sound course of ethics, much superstition, odds and ends of Chinese history and tradition, a trifle of local geography, versification, great elegance in literary style and composition, and a marvellous development of the memory, these and these only are secured as the result of the Chinese educational system.

Doubtless such a system was immeasurably better than any to be found elsewhere in the world at the time of its establishment and for many centuries thereafter. But when brought into contact and contrast with the knowledge of modern days, it becomes fairly grotesque in its unfitness for the purposes which it still is forced to serve. To this system of education is due many, if not all, of the startling anomalies

constantly met with in the broadest-minded, most intelligent Chinese. To it is due the fact that one meets with Chinese statesmen equal in mental acuteness and wisdom in certain directions to any found in America or Europe, yet who believe the earth to be square, maintain that eclipses are caused by a huge dog seeking to devour the sun or moon, are ignorant of the first rudiments of science, and who are confident that a fox can change itself, at will, into the form of a man. A belief in lucky days, geomantic influences, the power of a bit of stone to divert the course of evil spirits, and the value of bogus paper money burned for the dead, is strangely commingled with close, logical reasoning powers, and far-sighted, broad-minded statesmanship. Are they wise and able because of their education, or in spite of it? If in spite of it, then one must confess that among the Chinese of the present day are to be found men who, if thoroughly educated along the lines of modern thought and progress, would lead the world in the coming years. If because of it, then what might they not accomplish if equipped with modern knowledge, in addition to their antique and narrow range of learning!

It is impossible to give, with any degree of accuracy, an estimate of the number of living



members of this literary order. It can, however, safely be said that they aggregate several millions. In every hamlet throughout the empire is found the school for boys, and every day from daylight to dark may be heard the deafening clamor of the students, as they shout out the wisdom of Confucius at the top of their lungs. This is the mode of study required, and a quiet pupil receives an early application of the bamboo rod. The aim and end of all study, the line of ambition of every scholar in all of these innumerable schools, is to pass the government examinations, become a gentleman, a member of the honored and privileged class, and obtain official position. And thus is outlined the one brilliant career open to all and possible to every one.

Examinations are held, under governmental supervision, annually in all the minor cities throughout China, and triennially in each of the provincial capitals and in Peking. There are three different degrees granted. The first and lowest is entitled "Hsiu Tsai," or "Budding Talent," because he who obtains it is supposed to give great promise of future success. The second is called "Chu Jen," or "Promoted Man," since he has gained the second step in a brilliant career. And the third and highest degree is called "Chin Shih," or "Enrolled

Scholar," because he has successfully passed all of the barriers, and his name has been enrolled at Peking in the final list of the foremost scholars of the time. These degrees must be taken in sequence, and no student is admitted to compete for a higher degree who has failed to pass the lower. The first and second degrees are granted in the provinces. The third must be fought for and won in Peking. Three examinations are held for the lowest degree. Those who pass the first, even if unsuccessful in the other two, have their names posted upon the walls of the magistrate's office, and this honor is called "Hsien Ming," or "having a name in the district." In a similar way, those who succeed in the second examination, even if they fail in the third, have their names posted in the mayor's office, and are entitled "Fu Ming," or "having a name in the city." Unofficial village examinations are also sometimes held by the local authorities, assisted by resident graduates, at which small prizes are awarded to the best scholars. Thus a sort of brevet rank is given to those who fail to obtain the lowest official degree, and even the smallest children are encouraged and stimulated to successful effort.

It is not easy to overestimate the heart, the eagerness manifested in this most defective

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system of education, by the entire mass of the population of China. With them it is the people's path to influence, power, and fame. No greater hardships have been endured in any land than are gladly submitted to by Chinese families, in order that one or more of their number may enter the honored class. There is no age limit beyond which candidates are barred from the lists, and in any country less populous than China the number of men who spend their entire lives in the vain effort to win a coveted degree would be incredible. So common is this persistency that, by a general order, the Emperor confers the highest degree upon all candidates of good moral character who have won each degree but the last, and have tried unsuccessfully for that, at each triennial examination, until they reach the age of ninety! The long journey to Peking from the remote provinces, involving months of time and hundreds of miles in a country devoid of railways, and over precipitous mountain roads, proves too much for some, who die *en route*. And others die of exhaustion and old age, in the course of the examination at the capital.

As might be expected, great is the rejoicing when a successful candidate returns to his home. Immense red placards are posted announcing

the fact of his success, and calling upon all to rejoice. Feasts are given, bands of music engaged, and triumphal processions parade the streets. The victorious student has a genuine triumph and is flattered and praised as an honor to his parents, to the teacher and school where he studied, and to the village or city of his birth.

It is impossible to determine to what extent favoritism, bribery, or other forms of corruption, prevail in the conduct of these examinations. If they were invariably honest and immaculate, then China would stand unique and pre-eminent, among all the nations of the world, in all time. At rare intervals, memorials to the throne have appeared, accusing officials of wrongdoing, but they have far more commonly complained of the sale of offices to non-graduates than of any irregularities in the examinations. Some sweeping and flippant statements upon this point have been made by foreign writers, but such statements, however epigrammatic and pungent they may appear, are rarely trustworthy. It is well to bear in mind that things are seldom either so black or so white as they are painted. The author has discussed the subject of these examinations with probably some hundreds of candidates, successful and unsuccessful, and the only charge he has heard was that, while Chinese and

Manchus were nominally placed upon the same footing, it appeared to be easier for the latter to secure a degree than the former.

The question of the purity or corruption of the Chinese literary examinations is, however, not pertinent to the object of this chapter, or this volume. Whatever may be the defects or abuses in either the theory or practical enforcement of the system, it has been in operation for many centuries, has provided the nation with an immense reserve force of educated men, from whom all civil officers have been chosen, and who have controlled public affairs and private opinion as well. In the judgment of a distinguished authority, it has secured to the people a more equitable and vigorous body of magistrates than they could get in any other way, and has powerfully contributed to uphold the existing institutions of the empire. In its freedom from all class restrictions, it has endeared itself to the people as a genuinely democratic road to honor. Their own fathers, brothers, and sons have profited by it, and to them it represents a practical self-government, the people ruling over themselves.

The Chinese recognize four grades in the social scale. These are called the "shih, nung, kung, shang;" or, translated, scholars, farmers,

laborers, and merchants. The "shih," educated men or literati, rank at the top, because brains are better than the body. The "nung," embracing all who till the soil, rank second, because they are valuable to the community as producers. The "kung," in which class are included all skilled and unskilled laborers, is placed third in the list, because the members of this class, by their hands and brains, transform the less useful into that which is of greater value and service. The "shang," which covers all men engaged in the immense variety of commercial operations, is placed at the bottom of the social scale, because men thus employed add nothing to the common wealth. They neither produce nor transform, but trade upon the labor and the needs of others. They are simply the medium of interchange.

The Chinese have a common saying, which may be translated "once an official always an official." Its meaning is broader than those words imply, for it covers all who have passed the government examinations, all the literati, whether actual office-holders or not, and forbids them following any of the lower avocations of life. They are gentlemen, and, as such, at the top of the social ladder. They may not descend to any of the lower rounds in the search for a

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livelihood, since pride of class and personal ambition alike forbid such degradation. Chinese ladies deform their hands with the most absurdly long finger-nails as an indication that those hands are never soiled by any form of domestic labor. And these Chinese gentlemen also cultivate one or more finger-nails of extravagant length, as a sign that their hands can only be employed in some direct or indirect form of literary work where the long nail may be utilized in turning leaves, cutting paper, and like elegant occupations. As Buddhism has its "eight precious objects" or utensils employed in its form of worship, and hence held sacred, so the literati have their eight precious objects or utensils, consisting of ink, ink-stone, brush, paper, water-jar, paper-weight, books, and scrolls. And the only forms of labor open to these gentlemen are such as require the use of these implements.

Only a small proportion of those who pass the examinations, and hence are eligible to civil office, are able to secure positions. The supply far exceeds the demand. Many spend their lives in a vain struggle for appointment. The writer once exchanged calls with a Chinese of this class, in a provincial capital, who had spent twenty-one years in the vain effort to attract the

attention of those who had the appointing power to his fitness for office. He called, upon the first and fifteenth of each month, at the door of the viceroy's office and left his card. Once or twice each year, upon special holidays or other occasions of public reception, he would be admitted and have merely a moment in which to make his bow before the great man and pass on. During all of the remaining weary days and months in each year he had no occupation whatever. He spent the time in bitter criticism of those in power and of fellow-students who had been more fortunate than himself, and in alternate fits of despondency and hope. He knew every vacancy in the long list of provincial offices, the peculiarities and emoluments of each post, chewed with delight every bit of official scandal, and was full to the brim with accounts of the wrongdoing of those in office. He was wretchedly poor, occupied one room opening from the stable yard of a miserable inn, did his own washing at night to save appearances, and lived upon a trifle less than two dollars each month. This sum was furnished him by his father and brother, themselves in the depths of poverty, but who stinted themselves and went hungry and half clothed to help him in whom all the pride and ambition and hope of the family



were centred. And yet the only official position which he could hope or expect to obtain was insignificant and would not return more than two hundred dollars each year.

This literary graduate is a specimen of a very large contingent to be found in Peking, each provincial capital, and every political centre. And to this body of unemployed and untested official talent is to be added the very considerable number of men who, having once obtained office, have, through misconduct, inefficiency, loss of a father, which sends all officials into retirement for a nominal three years, or loss of political patrons, caused them to be dismissed the public service. Many of them are miserably poor, and many of them are, doubtless, unfit to occupy any position of public trust. All of them are debarred from the broad range of useful and productive labor by the senseless pride of class already mentioned. Unless forced by actual want, it is seldom indeed that a man is found among them brave enough to abandon his hopeless pursuit for office and to seek his livelihood in some less pretentious calling.

The vast majority of them wait and wait on, forming a body of dissatisfied and hence dangerous unemployed, not, as in Western lands, in

the lower orders of society, but among those who form and control public opinion, among the leaders of men. They are sharp, angry, and selfish in their criticisms of those in power, eagerly watching for any misstep or indiscreet act, by means of which the happy occupant of place may be pulled down, and some one of them step into his shoes. It is safe to say that every office-holder in the Chinese Empire, from the cabinet minister to the obscure police magistrate, is watched by a hundred hungry eyes and clutched at by a hundred eager hands, all seeking, by fair means or foul, to compass his disgrace and their preferment. A large proportion of the lack of vigor and energy, of decided action, of timidity, strange to us, on the part of Chinese officials, is due to their bitter knowledge of this hostile environment, and of their danger from it.

Under the Chinese civil service laws no person is permitted to hold office in the province in which he was born. Nor are two persons so nearly related as cousins allowed to receive official appointments in the same province. Hence, if the seeker after place wishes to be at the scene of his future imaginary triumphs, and to press his claims in person, as he generally must,

upon those who can promote his wishes, all this weary waiting must be endured at a distance from home and among uninterested strangers.


A small proportion of those who are unable to secure appointment to any place or territory are given acting or brevet rank. Such are assigned to occasional duty on special commissions, or employed on secret service by the higher authorities, until they have proved their fitness, and until such time as a local vacancy can be found or made for them. In such cases a Chinese word commonly translated "Expectant" is prefixed to the nominal title granted. A larger number of graduates, having waited for appointment until patience and purse are alike exhausted, sink into positions directly subordinate to official life. They become clerks, copyists, private secretaries, men of all work, and general hangers-on, watching for crumbs, and some of them ready for any work, however dirty or dishonest. Another large class fill a position alike important and lucrative under the peculiar judicial system of China, though considered but semi-respectable, and for this position a word of explanation is necessary.

There has never been a legislative department in the Chinese Government. The laws of the empire consist wholly of the decrees of the

Emperor as they have been issued and preserved during many centuries, and supplemented, in unimportant or local matters, by the orders and acts of viceroys. The legal profession is also unknown in practice, and, theoretically, held in profound contempt. One learned viceroy remarked to the writer that he was abundantly able to prove that wrong was right, and no lawyer was necessary to accomplish that feat for him. And rumor asserts that some Chinese officials are so expert in the art of relieving litigants of their cash, as to leave no room for the services of lawyers in that capacity. All judicial action is settled by precedent. And, since the records are scrupulously kept, and run back into the remote past, every office is encumbered with a body of precedents voluminous almost beyond belief. This fact explains the occupation of the large class of graduates mentioned. They are called "searchers," and their duty is to examine the records for precedents fitting any given case requiring judicial action. They are employed indifferently by the magistrate, by litigants, and by relatives of persons accused of crime. In such a mass of records, it is seldom difficult to find a precedent in any given case which, by judicious manipulation and restatement, will suit the wishes, always rein-

forced by the purse, of him who employs the searcher. And it is probable that this class of semi-official hangers-on at Chinese courts work more perversions of justice and cruel wrongs than any other men in the empire. They are always well-to-do, and never respected by officials or people.

There still remains a large number, perhaps a majority of the literary graduates, who are unable to secure any position in or even remotely connected with official life. Some of these return to their homes and become teachers in the village or city schools, training up a new generation in the same antique and inadequate education which has proved a failure with them. Others enter the medical profession, no special study, examinations, or certificates of competency being required in China. These procure a few remedies or prescriptions, look wise, commonly wear large spectacles, talk learnedly about the twenty or more distinct pulses which Chinese doctors have discovered in the human body, administer some remedies which are simple yet efficacious, and many others which ought to be valuable, if their use is at all proportionate to their nastiness. A favorite tonic with these gentlemen is bears' bones or tigers' claws powdered, and administered in wine. These medi-



cines are supposed to have a double effect and increase the courage, besides giving strength to the body. Chinese doctors are liable under the law for malpractice, but such cases are practically never heard of in the courts.

Others, again, become professional story-tellers. Having procured a small wooden table, a dozen rough wooden seats without backs or cushions, an awning of blue cotton, a teapot and cup, and having stored his memory with a large assortment of tales suited to the capacity and taste of his hearers, the story-teller is ready for business. Stretching his tent and placing his benches by the side of some busy street, he awaits his audience. He gives them prose and poetry, history, tradition, myth, fairy tale, and romance. After each instalment, which lasts but a few moments, a small basket is passed for contributions, and no Chinaman who has seated himself feels at liberty to refuse. Doubtless much information of real value is imparted to the common people in this way. And to much that is false and injurious a wider circulation is given.

Still others again become "feng shui Hsien Sheng"—that is to say, professors of geomancy, or fortune-tellers. In this capacity they interfere with, and to a serious extent control, every phase

of public and private life in China. The prince and the pauper alike must consult them. No marriage contract can be made and no grave opened without their approval. They fix the date when an emperor may ascend the throne and a peanut vendor open his petty stall. The name an infant may bear, the day when his head shall be shaved for the queue of youth and manhood, the day when he may enter school, or what occupation he shall follow, and when he shall enter upon it, when and whom he shall marry, a thousand and one other details in his life, the number of days after death when he may be buried, the location, line of direction, and general environment of his grave, even including the shrubs and bushes which may grow near it,—all these and innumerable other points in each human life must be fixed and settled by the divination of the fortune-teller. He is to be found everywhere, and is generally busy. His fees vary with the financial ability of his customers, and often some vital question remains vexed and difficult of solution until every possible cash has been extracted from the pouch of the anxious client. No other force is comparable with the absurd and yet iron grip in which superstition holds the entire Chinese people of all classes and grades of intelligence, and the fortune-tellers

are its spokesmen and prime ministers. Without venturing upon an estimate of the enormous sums wasted in such absurd nonsense, it is safe to assume that, in a short period of years, they would aid very largely in the construction of railway lines, and other modes of intercommunication from one extreme of the empire to the other.

With all of these avocations which are possible to the literati overcrowded, there still remains a large contingent of unemployed. Almost invariably poor, they live upon their friends, and upon such scraps of employment as may from time to time fall in their way. A larger percentage of them than of any other class in the Chinese community become victims of the opium habit. Disappointed, dissatisfied, and idle, they are to a greater or less degree dangerous. The special privileges and immunities granted to them as a class, and the clannish spirit, strong in the entire body, renders it extremely difficult to deal with even the most vicious among them. They cannot be punished or made accountable for any violation of law until deprived of their literary degree. And this can only be done by vice-regal authority. Through their influence over the masses they are often able to control and direct official action.



But the authorities find the endeavor to hold the literati in check a most perplexing if not hopeless task.

Some two hundred and seventy-five years after the death of Confucius, a Chinese emperor showed his reverence and regard for the sage by offering sacrifice at his tomb. Some two hundred years later, the first temple was erected to his memory by imperial command. Thus the teachings of Confucius became a cult, and that which was intended by the author as a code of ethics was dignified with the name of religion. It may interest the curious to know that the birth of Christ, the elevation of Confucianism to a religious belief, and the introduction of Buddhism from India into China were substantially contemporaneous events.

Thus Confucianism has been called the state religion. Tablets to the spirit of the sage are to be found in every school-room. Temples in his honor have been erected in every city and centre of population. Boys in the schools are required to render obeisance to the tablet on entering and leaving the room, and all officials are required on stated occasions to do reverence to his memory. Yet this so-called worship of Confucius is connected with and really subordi-

nate to certain rites and ceremonies which antedated him by many centuries, and of which he said, while neither approving nor condemning them, that, if observed at all, it should be in an orderly, decorous manner. No claim is made by even his most devout followers that Confucius was a god, or anything more than a wise man, a sage. His worship makes use of neither priest nor creed. In form it is precisely similar to the worship of ancestors, and this fact may give a more exact idea of its nature, of the central thought represented in it. The Chinese have worshipped their ancestors from the beginning of history, as the authors of their being, the fathers of their bodies. And the educated classes do precisely similar reverence to Confucius as the founder of knowledge, the father of literature. If the word "worship" carries with it the idea of a creative or supreme being, then neither the ancestral rites nor the Confucian can be regarded as worship or as idolatrous. Many Chinese officials secretly disbelieve in the imperial cult and the added worship of Confucius. A distinguished member of their body once said to the writer: "We do not really believe in Confucius. But the ignorant masses hold him in the most profound regard, and hence we

appear to worship him, and we quote his sayings, in order by these means to hold the populace in subjection."

It is always difficult, and frequently impossible, to analyze any Oriental motive or habit of thought down to its ultimate factors. Whatever may be the exact character of the so-called worship of Confucius, the literati have established themselves as the champions of the faith, the conservators of the system. By them everything is referred back to him, measured by the line which the sage is supposed to have drawn, or weighed in his balance. To them he is the final, universal test and solvent. And this is but natural. They know no other measure. And they are the depositaries of all his wisdom—and of little else. Each of their number is supposed to have memorized every known word that issued from his lips. Each honors the sage, and enhances his own importance, whenever he quotes him as authority. Confucius is at once his only capital and his stock in trade. Reduce Confucius to his proper level, as a wise man twenty-five centuries ago, but antiquated and valueless when compared with the needs and the leaders of modern days—do this, and the entire Chinese literary aristocracy is made bankrupt.

Small wonder, then, that the literati of China

have constituted themselves the sturdy and stubborn champions of whatever is represented by the word Confucianism! Whatever ideas of religion they may possess—and many of them are rank atheists as regards any god, true or false—pride, self-interest, the natural instinct of self-preservation, all combine to keep them personally loyal to their ancient leader, and quick to oppose any reduction of his influence or prestige. If anything more is needed to explain their intense and bigoted loyalty to the so-called religion of the sage, it may be found in the fact, that the ancient rites and ceremonies already referred to as antedating and superior to Confucianism, yet combined with it, constitute the only indigenous form of religious belief that China has known. Buddhism was imported bodily from India. And although the founder of Taoism was a Chinese, he pursued his studies and developed his fantastic theories in India.

Good as the Chinese educational system may have been in its day, and in contrast with the crass ignorance then existing, it has long outlived its usefulness in its present form, and become a hindrance and a menace to the empire. Revised, reformed upon the basis of modern ideas, and continued as the framework of civil

service, it would be worthy of imitation by the most intelligent of modern governments.

The thoughtful reader must readily see that this body of educated men constitutes the largest single force, operating for good or evil, within the limits of the Chinese Empire, and dominating alike the throne and the populace. Nor can he fail to realize that this entire force is, and must be from the very conditions of its existence, arrayed in deadly hostility to progress, or to any change in the existing régime. This is neither unnatural nor surprising. Selfishness and bigotry are cosmopolitan, breeding readily in every part of the world. And office-holders in our own country to-day who have obtained undeserved preferment by wading through the dirtier waters of politics are neither enthusiastic nor unanimous in the advocacy of civil service reform.

The Chinese literati are to be pitied rather than censured. For nineteen centuries and a half these incarnations of Confucian wisdom have moved in and swayed a world of their own—a stationary world—with neither knowledge nor imagination of another just without their closed doors, a world which swung forward through vast reaches of progress each year, and which was coming into inevitable contact with

their own. Less than sixty years ago this collision occurred. For purposes alien to them and, as they believe, injurious to their nation, their doors of seclusion were thrown down, and they have been brought to face a new world, in which their knowledge is thrust aside as antiquated and worthless, their pride ridiculed as having no reasonable foundation, their influence antagonized, and their very means of livelihood threatened. Many of them are honest, conscientious, and patriotic in their stern opposition to the new order of things. And when other phases and forces which have been at work in China, during the past sixty years, are considered and understood, this fact may seem less surprising.

Patriotic or selfish, wise or absurd in their opposition to modern ways and ideas, the entire history of foreign relations with the Chinese Empire exhibits the literati as an intensely hostile and dangerous force. Every absurd story, calculated to arouse popular fear and hatred against foreigners, has either originated with or been countenanced by them. The Tientsin massacre of 1870 was emphatically their work. And the ultimate responsibility for every popular uprising, peaceful or violent, against foreigners, or the modern ideas and ways of life which they

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represent, must be laid upon the shoulders of the literati. They utterly thwarted the efforts of the Emperor in 1886 to broaden the range of study, and the civil service examinations by the addition of mathematical subjects. For more than thirty years they have practically boycotted the Peking University, where languages, mathematics, and modern science have been taught in connection with the Confucian course. And the literati, rather than the Empress Dowager, must be held accountable for the recent fiasco in the plans of the Emperor for reform. Those plans, crude, ill advised, and far too radical for the intense conservatism of the Chinese, might still have met with some poor measure of success, and have proved to be stepping-stones to better things. But the bitter hostility of the literati and official class encouraged the ambition of the Empress Dowager. Utter failure and the practical dethronement of Kuang Hsu were the results.

Here then is to be found the most serious factor and the greatest power in Chinese life, whether viewed from a commercial, social, or political standpoint. How to utilize the literary aristocracy or to neutralize their influence, is the greatest and most dangerous problem in modern China. It is fatal to ignore them. They must

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be reckoned with. And that reckoning will exhaust a measureless amount of tact, patience, sagacity, and wisdom. That Chinese statesman who is equal to this task, who shall win over this great body of men to even a qualified approval of the new order and of progress—he will have solved the Chinese problem, and will deserve the benedictions of his race and of the world. None but a Chinese should venture to undertake the task.



## CHAPTER IV.

### CHINESE SOCIETIES.

**THE** Chinese possess great natural power of organization. Their uniform, systematic, methodical habits of thought and action lead directly to organized effort. Individually, the Chinaman is cautious, secretive, and timid. Hence, he seeks by means of combination the courage and protection which he cannot find in himself alone. In this respect he differs only in degree, not in kind, from people in other lands. And it should be said that, as a rule, Chinese combinations are far less frequently aimed against outsiders than toward mutual benefit. They are almost never offensive alliances, but rather mutual aid associations.

It has often been asserted that the Chinese are the most clannish people in the world. This may be true. But it is the clannishness of locality. A great communal combination, purely democratic in form, comes naturally and without

specific action into being. It never has an autocratic chief, and its leaders are simply the old men, the fathers of the people. Its purposes seldom go beyond the protection of the rights and privileges of the people of the district covered by it, and defence against incursions of any sort from without. It is a natural sequence to one peculiarity of the patriarchal form of the Chinese Government, by which the old men in any village or district are given semi-official authority over the younger and held accountable for the good conduct of the latter.

It develops, as one of its effects, great local pride, or provincialism, and frequently a keen rivalry between the inhabitants of different districts, and this in turn results in brawls and collisions between the different parties. Two Chinese engaged in the same calling, but coming from different districts, will seldom work harmoniously together. If an American, resident in Peking and employing Pekingese servants, should add one from Tientsin or any other locality to his staff, trouble would arise inevitably and almost at once. And each of the servants of the locality would, being questioned, assure his master that the employé from Tientsin was a very bad man, and would really believe it himself. For "a man whom I do not like" and

“a bad man” are practically synonymous phrases among the Chinese.

A variety of circumstances have tended to extend and intensify this clanship of locality. The system of ancestral worship, which requires that each man should rest after death in the family cemetery, has had much to do with it. The lack of newspapers and of facilities for easy intercommunication between different parts of the empire have prevented contact and contrast with other and remote districts, and thus fostered an ignorant pride in each Chinaman over the fancied superiority of his own neighborhood. Some two hundred years ago the Emperor, Kang Hsi—than whom few wiser rulers have occupied a throne—prepared a series of essays, familiarly known as the “Sacred Edicts,” in which the young men of the empire were to be instructed at stated periods by their elders. Among other injunctions laid upon the rising generation in these imperial instructions, they were charged not to roam abroad, but to establish themselves in their own villages and pursue the callings followed by their fathers before them. This advice, broadly disseminated and taught through the empire, has given a fixedness of home and occupation to the mass of the Chinese people, and done much to develop a

clannish disposition. It has thrown a question of respectability against any young men who seek either change of place or calling. It has given a basis to the idea that each centre of population, no matter how small or poverty-stricken, is best for its own inhabitants—and hence better than any other. Thus it has furnished an immediate breeding-ground for rivalry and dispute.

Another phase of this clannish spirit is found in Peking, developed by a different set of original circumstances. When that city was finally chosen by Genghis Khan and his grandson Kublai—the great Tartar conquerors—to be the capital of their vast dominions, men were invited from various parts of China to come and establish themselves there. This step was necessary to provide conveniences and supplies for the court and the vast army. To avoid confusion and quarrels among the newcomers, various pursuits and avocations were assigned to the men from different provinces. And to this day the bankers and builders in Peking are substantially all men from Shansi; the water-carriers and furriers are all from Shantung; and those who transport passengers and merchandise to different parts of the empire are all Mohammedans, the descendants of Persians who went to China many

centuries ago. It is so difficult for any outsider to establish himself in any calling, thus set apart centuries ago to a class of which he is not a member, that it is never attempted.

This clannish spirit sometimes exists as a special combination covering large portions of the empire, yet having no definite organization, and specially active against the natives of some other region. It is never difficult, in such cases, to find the reason. Thus the men of Canton are peculiarly objectionable to the natives of all of central, northern, and western China. In the horrible massacre at Tientsin in 1870 nearly as many Cantonese as natives of France were put to death. They are disliked and combined against, first because they are too far from home and are seeking a livelihood in sections of the empire which do not belong to them, but have been set apart by Heaven for others. Another and more serious reason is found in the fact that they possess higher business qualities than other Chinese. The Cantonese are quicker, better, sharper merchants, more agile and dextrous in their commercial touch than the men of other parts of the empire. They are the Yankees of China. Hence the mutual protective combination against them. Even the officials clan against those from the province of Canton.

They do it because the latter are excessively clannish themselves and are, at least, accused of rendering undue favor and assistance to officials or people from their own province.

But no serious weight need be given to this divisive feeling in matters which concern either the Chinese race or the empire. It is a mere surface play of wind. The Chinese have their local feuds and squabbles, their clans and combinations, they may wrangle and quarrel among themselves, but all those affairs count for nothing when a common enemy or a common danger threatens them. Then their natural talent for organization acts in a new direction, and they bring a practically unanimous power into operation. Probably no province in the empire has so many clan divisions, bitter local feuds, and factions among the inhabitants as that of Fuchien. Through a large portion of it there is no common local language. Dialects so divide up the speech that residents upon one bank of a stream are in some cases unable to understand the speech of those who live upon the other. Yet in all China is found no province where all the people have combined so unanimously and with such bitterness and persistency against every form of what they consider encroachment by foreigners of any nationality.

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The person who considers China as a conglomeration rather than a chemical compound, as an accidental mixture of different races and tribes rather than a unified, assimilated nation, can have but little knowledge of her people. History furnishes no parallel of any race or nation, of noticeable size, so homogeneous, so uniform, and so intense in its characteristics. Their nationality is burned into them. They cannot slough it off or exchange it for any other. They absorb other races. But they remain always Chinese. A serious mistake will be made by any man or any government which imagines that there exists any available points of topographical division, any lack of cohesive force, or any lines of cleavage which may be taken advantage of to effect a partition of the Chinese Empire.

When it comes to what may be termed more definite combinations, the Chinese genius exhibits itself in very much the same corporate forms with the same broad range of objects as the like disposition develops in other lands. Merchants organize in order to control the market, regulate prices, and avoid unprofitable competition. Labor combines, not so much to determine wages and hours of labor as the number of apprentices allowable, and the length of

their term of service. The servants in any large establishment, official or domestic, form themselves into a company for business purposes. Each one, in his particular line of duty, secures a percentage, commonly called a "squeeze," upon all purchases, sales, or other financial transactions. The proceeds are placed in a common fund, and dividends declared at stated times to each, according to his rank or position as compared with the other servants or stockholders. In a private establishment, if the master buys a house, his servants secure a small portion of the price and it goes into the common fund for distribution. If his cook buys a few pounds of steak or a basket of eggs, a few cash are added to the reported cost and quietly passed to the credit of the common fund. If the barber or the chiropodist attends upon a member of the family, a few cash from his fee goes to the benefit of this servant's collection. In public offices the same system obtains among the attendants. If a great man calls upon a greater, the chief follower of the visitor presents a sum of money, regulated in size by circumstances, to the servants of the host, on behalf of his master. Litigants in court are expected to fee the attendants. Through the whole round of official or private life this system is found. In



one of the larger legations in Peking the native servants for years maintained a private banking account, made daily deposits, and divided the proceeds each three months. And this is not, in Chinese families, at least, quite such an unrighteous club as may at first appear. For the servants receive almost nothing in the way of wages, and this system of payment by percentages is quite understood between them and their masters. This form of combination has existed from time immemorial, and is well-nigh universal. Something not unlike it has been seen in Europe.

In all the large centres of population in China, where the numbers will warrant, provincial clubs or guilds are formed. Each such guild is limited in membership to persons from a particular province who are residents in that city. Thus in Peking are to be found a Shansi Guild, a Shantung Guild, a Honan Guild, and others, each composed of and confined to persons resident in the capital, but natives of the province whose name it bears. The nature of these organizations is co-operative in matters of business, and also social and philanthropic. Each looks after all people of its own district who may be in Peking, cares for them and their families in cases of poverty or illness, aids them to return home if nothing better offers, or to

find employment if that is possible. An important part of the duty of each guild is to see that the dearest wish of each Chinese heart is fulfilled—that is, to see that the body of each member is carried decently and reverently back to his native village after death and laid, with all proper ceremonial, beside the dust of his ancestors. And a considerable portion of the funds of each guild is expended in this way. The members meet frequently for social intercourse and amusement, sometimes decorous and sometimes otherwise. More than one of the provincial guilds in Peking maintain theatres, where plays and other public entertainments are given.

There is an immense number and great variety of local mutual aid societies in China. Some of them are much like the "Burial Clubs" found in Great Britain and elsewhere. Others are somewhat similar to life, or rather annuity, insurance companies. And it is no uncommon thing for a small party of men to band together, each pledging himself to pay a fixed sum of money, each ten days or month, into a common treasury. When these payments have continued a length of time agreed upon in advance, one of the number, chosen by lot, draws out for his own use an amount larger than his total con-

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tributions. His connection with the combination then ceases. The others continue payments until each in turn has drawn this same fixed amount, when the arrangement ends. Failure upon the part of any member to make his contribution at each due date causes forfeiture of his share in the enterprise. It should be said that these private lottery combinations are a prolific source of quarrels and litigation.

Temperance societies are found everywhere in the Chinese Empire, and have existed there from time immemorial. The organization is invariably secret, and nothing has been learned concerning its ritual or the ceremonies of initiation. It is, however, known that originally the members bound themselves to abstain from all wine and spirits (made from rice) and from the use of tobacco in any form, and that nearly a century ago opium was added to the list of forbidden articles. There is probably no national or provincial organization of these reformers. But they are to be found everywhere and in all grades of society.

Nothing need be said concerning a large class of secret social organizations among the Chinese, corresponding somewhat closely with the Masonic and other like fraternities in the Western world. They exist, they have their secret signs,

grips, and passwords, and there, as elsewhere, promote good-fellowship among men. But little or nothing is known concerning them. They are not in evidence as having any serious influence upon the nation, and may be dismissed with this word of mention.

Much interesting fiction has been written regarding secret political organizations among the people of China. Where little or nothing is known, much can the more readily be imagined. And it is a fact, at once curious and attractive to the speculative mind, that, while distance in space lessens the apparent size of any given object, distance in time commonly has the effect to enormously increase it. "There were giants in the earth in those days" is the inevitable conclusion reached by any reader who seeks to accept much that has been written about the remote past either in China or elsewhere. Thus the act of a Chinese usurper or patriot, whichever he may be called, requiring the members of his band to paint their eyebrows crimson before going into battle, for purposes of identification in the *mêlée*, and also with the childlike purpose, too often effective, of frightening the enemy, has grown in 2000 years into an immense—because ancient—secret political society called "The Crimson Eyebrows." The worship

of the Queen of Heaven—represented by the moon—was borrowed from the Christian system and added to Buddhism about A.D. 1280. A new ritual of moon worship was then introduced and widely adopted. At the same time a rebellion was in progress against the Mongol dynasty, in which a Chinese, who had formerly been a Buddhist priest, played some part. This slight coincidence was enough, in the minds of imaginative historians, to produce the “Society of Moon-Gazers,” which is supposed, as a secret political combination, to have shaken China and upset the Mongol rule.

One writer professes to trace these secret societies of political malcontents back to a point far antedating the Christian era and, indeed, the period of authentic Chinese history. He gives more or less fanciful names to several supposed to have been in existence at that time. Another writer of no less authority asserts that these societies first appeared in China so recently as about A.D. 1800. This last is positively a misstatement, as will be seen. But the fact is, as might be expected, that very little is known about such combinations. Their records are not public property, their membership and the purposes of their organization are only known among themselves. If their schemes fail, they

disappear. If they succeed, then success puts an end to the society, as there is no longer any object in keeping it alive. Thus, in either event, they are generally ephemeral, and their records die with them.

Doubtless there have been, from first to last, a very considerable number of secret organizations, semi-religious and semi-political, within the Chinese Empire. The great majority of them have been purely local and temporary, formed to encourage devotion to some special cult, and to effect redress or reform of some grievance against the authorities. Or the first-named purpose may be purely nominal, used as a cloak to cover the second and avert suspicion. In this shape, they are the natural outgrowth of the clan system. They are, in fact, the clan incorporated into a body better calculated to produce results. These come and go, serve as checks and warnings to local officials, but have not the least general influence upon the empire at large.

It must be borne in mind that politics excite or interest the Chinese to an extremely limited extent. In an empire where there are no elections and no elective officers, no legislative body, and hence no caucuses, no political conventions, and no nominees, there is little left in the way of politics worthy of the name. There are no

bosses, no heelers, no parades, no mutual mud-throwing—and not too much self-government. Leaving local troubles out of sight—and the method of dealing with them has already been indicated—there appears to remain but two general topics for political agitation which can have stirred the Chinese mind during the past two and one-half centuries. These are the exchange of the entire system of government for some other and the overthrow of the present Manchu dynasty in favor of one Chinese. To these two the foreigner and foreign aggressions have been added during the past fifty years.

So far as the first-mentioned topic of political agitation is concerned, it finds no place whatever in the Chinese mind. It is one of the most remarkable facts in history, that, in all their records, exact or traditional, no sign or vestige of any dissatisfaction with their form of government can be traced. The student of history may go back through twenty-eight dynasties to B.C. 2205, about the time of the birth of Abraham, and back from that point, through tradition and myth, to the days of Pang Ku—supposed by some to be a Chinese contemporary of Noah, and by others to antedate him—and nowhere is there to be found any indication of dissatisfaction with, or important change in, the Chinese govern-

mental system. Revolutions came, dynasties were swept away, and others took possession of the throne, to be in turn cast aside, but the theory and system of government was never altered. In modern times, the existing Manchu dynasty came into control of the Chinese Empire, not because of any revolt against the form of government, but because of a quarrel between two sons of a deceased Ming emperor as to which of them should place himself in control. The system is patriarchal and paternal. It seemingly was bestowed, full grown and complete, upon the Chinese people at the very beginning of their existence, and has remained unchanged and continuous to the present time, and to their entire content. No cabal or open attack upon it would meet with any following or success.

The rule of the Manchus has been, upon the whole, wise and impartial from the Chinese point of view, and has given little occasion for organization against it, excepting on purely sentimental grounds. That the Emperor is a foreigner constitutes the gravest charge brought against him. The main burdens and honors of administration are in the hands of Chinese, little or no favoritism is shown. Viewed from any practical point, the Manchus have not overrun



the empire, but China has absorbed the Manchus. And there is no serious public sentiment against their rule. No person can question the thoroughly national sentiment, the patriotism, of such men as Li Hung Chang, Liu Kun Yi, and Chang Chih Tung, the three great viceroys—and they would be great men in any country—who practically hold the destinies of the empire in their hands while these lines are being written. They are all Chinese, and yet of tried and thorough loyalty to the reigning family. While the more intelligent and thoughtful-minded among the people may be heard at times to regret that the sagacious and virile power of administration which so strongly characterized the earlier emperors of the present régime should not have been reproduced in their successors, and that much laxity and corruption has crept in as a result, yet their wishes for reform never even hint at a change of dynasty. And remarks of this nature come quite as frequently from Manchus as from Chinese.

Those in power have taken few protective measures against secret intrigue or open revolt. A large Manchu militia force is gathered in and about Peking. Theoretically, they report for drill twice each month. They have resided there for generations with their families, some of them

have gone into business. They have lost the last instinct of war possessed by their ancestors when they roamed about the breezy plateau of Manchuria, and their value as soldiers must be rated very low. Smaller garrisons of Manchus are to be found at certain other points in the empire. So far as soldiery is concerned, the ruling family may be said to depend entirely upon the loyalty and kindly feeling of the Chinese.

In the way of preventive measures, no natives, Manchus, or Chinese, are permitted to have firearms of any sort—soldiers, of course, excepted—and the importation of them is strictly prohibited. Sulphur and saltpetre, being ingredients of gunpowder, may only be taken into the empire on government account. They can be dealt in only by specially licensed persons, who are not allowed to sell any quantity of either, however small, to a private individual, except upon an authorization from a police magistrate. And this sums up all measures taken against attempts to subvert the dynasty, unless it should be added that the capital is under military rule, and that the governor is always a Manchu, and generally a remote relative of the imperial family. Such entire lack of any valuable precaution shows either a feeling of complete

security or an alarming ignorance of actual danger. So far as secret political intrigue is concerned, the history of the past two hundred and fifty years fails to indicate any serious cause of uneasiness. Local uprisings have been provoked by secret organizations, but these have been suppressed without difficulty. They have never obtained any general following among the people.

The first secret political society organized in China, of which anything authentic is known, was the "White Lily Sect"—"Pai Lien Chiao." It was formed about A.D. 1650. It appears to have originated in the province of Shantung, where its headquarters have generally remained, and where it has had the largest membership. Statements regarding membership, location of headquarters, and other details of such political conspiracies must, however, always be taken with much reserve. No reliable conjecture can be made of the total number of followers of the White Lily Sect at the period of its greatest prosperity. Its motive and watch-cry was, "Down with the Manchus, restore the Mings." Nothing is known of its ritual or methods of initiation. Purely political in its aims, it made but slight attempt to conceal them, under a pre-

text of zeal for the observance of ancient religious rites.

The attention of the government was speedily drawn to it, and it was interdicted by the Emperor, Shun Chih, any connection with it being made punishable with death. One of the best works of fiction in Chinese literature was supposed to have been written by a member of this sect, and was suppressed by the Emperor because of offensive references to the reigning family contained in it. It was called the "Hung Lou Meng," or "Dream of the Red Chamber," and it resembles a large number of fairy tales threaded together rather than a modern novel. By an ingenious substitution of false characters, words, occasionally throughout certain portions of the work—something like incorrect spelling—the imperial interdict was evaded, and it has continued in print and popularity down to the present day. Foreign students of Chinese commonly read a portion of it, the smooth and excellent style making it an invaluable text-book.

The determined efforts made by the government to suppress the White Lily Sect largely reduced its membership, and eventually produced a change of name. It became known indifferently as the "Tien Ti Huei"—"Heaven.

and Earth Society"—or the "San Ho Huei"—"Triad Society," though more commonly mentioned among foreigners by the latter title. Under this name, it is supposed to be still in existence. As recently as 1845, the British colonial authorities at Hong Kong passed an ordinance that any Chinese resident of the colony who was proved to be a member of the Triad Society should be held guilty of felony, imprisoned for three years, then branded and banished. At rare intervals mention of its operations is heard among the Chinese. The Imperial Government is still active against it, and to charge any native with being a member of the White Lily Sect, or the Triad Society, is to sign his death warrant. It is, however, at least questionable whether this organization, under either or any name, has had an existence for years. Local disturbances, instigated by local secret societies, are charged up to it as a convenient explanation, and the local Chinese authorities are frightened by its ghost, as children are frightened by bugbears.

It must be said of this, and of all other secret political organizations in China, that, whatever anxiety they may cause the government, they are little to be feared by it, since the outrages perpetrated by members and the illegal and

high-handed conduct of the leaders prejudice and combine the masses of the people against them. Blackmail, plunder, and robbery are the means frequently employed to force persons into their ranks. And these work their destruction.

The "Ke Lao Huei," or "Society of Elder Brothers," was originally a sort of Loyal Legion. It was founded about A.D. 1857 by Tseng Kuo Fan, a noted civil and military leader, and senior officer in command of the government forces, during the Tai Ping Rebellion. At the outset, its membership was confined to veterans of this war. Its purpose was the cultivation of a spirit of patriotism, and its motto might be said to be, "China for the Chinese." It was loyal to Manchu rule. The spirit which it encouraged was not directed against the reigning family, but against foreign—that is, American or European—aggression. The headquarters of the society were in Hunan, and its principal constituency was found there and in adjoining provinces. And that it has done efficient work in its peculiar line is shown by an exceptionally intense hostility to foreign innovations and modern progress throughout the region mentioned as its home. The limitation of membership to soldiers was removed at an early period in its history, and it is said to have had at one

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time more than a million names upon its rolls. This must be taken as purely conjectural, if not visionary.

The "Society of Elder Brothers" has been called a military conspiracy. If so, it still is not a conspiracy against the Chinese Government. It may have been used to bring the local or provincial authorities to terms on occasion, but no hostility to the imperial authority is in evidence against it. There is, on the other hand, ground for the suspicion that it has been the active agent in more than one uprising against foreigners, and of which they have been the victims. And there are no available means of determining whether it is still in existence, under the same or a changed name, or whether, if disbanded, the whirlwind of so-called "Boxers," now sweeping over China, has or has not inherited any considerable portion of its membership, together with its rallying cry of hatred to foreigners.

The only uprising against Manchu domination which has threatened serious results was that known as the "Tai Ping Rebellion," which burst into existence in 1850, devastated and depopulated the very heart of the Chinese Empire, and was only suppressed after nearly fifteen years of uncertain struggle. It is mentioned

here because the statement has been made that it was brought about by the Triad Society. Such is not the fact. That secret organization had incited an unimportant uprising in favor of the former, or Ming, dynasty, and it had failed. The Tai Ping Rebellion was brought about by the son of a small farmer, named Hung Chuan. He had passed the government examinations with credit, but, failing to secure an appointment to office, he became a malcontent, studied Buddhism, and became a Buddhist, studied Christianity, and accepted that faith. A compound of enthusiast, fanatic, and madman, he organized an uprising with a speed possible only in China, whose people are at once the slowest and the swiftest of humankind, planned a Christian government, with himself at its head, under the title of "The Heavenly King," deceived the missionaries, some of whom went by invitation to reside at his court, ran from Christianity to unparalleled blasphemy and excess of every sort, and finally ended his own life to avoid the public executioner. There is no cause to suspect a connection between this uprising and any secret political society.

It is too soon to speak of the "Boxer" movement, or, as it should be called, The Sword Society. Its membership, ritual, and purpose



are all unessential. It lacks every quality and condition necessary to success. Its only importance consists in the fact that it is the ebullition of a sentiment almost universal in China—hatred of the foreigner. For this reason alone, it deserves careful study and examination. The masses of the Chinese people are quiet, industrious, patient, given to endurance. But they are neither stolid nor lethargic. With them a sudden impulse has, invariably, a long-existing cause. Ideas and feelings may filter slowly into their consciousness, but once lodged there they gather force unnoted, until suddenly, and for no reason apparent at the moment, they burst into action, sweeping everything before them. It may be comparatively easy to take vengeance for such floods of violence. It is far more politic, as well as humane, to remove the cause. And it is most unfortunate for humanity at large if Western powers, justly assuming to themselves a higher civilization than that possessed by China, should, through any selfish policy, no matter how profitable in appearance, be even the remote cause of such unnecessary and irretrievable slaughter, suffering, and devastation as is now shocking the world.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CHINESE ARMY AND NAVY.

ALL military and naval matters in the Chinese Empire are placed under the control of the Board of War, which corresponds with the War Department in the United States, the War Office in Great Britain, and similar establishments in other Western lands. In the early days of Manchu rule, it was decreed that the Board of War should have "the government and direction of all the officers, within and without the eighteen provinces, employed in the military service of the nation, for the purpose of aiding the Emperor in protecting the people. Whatever appertains to the ordinances for taking away, giving, and resuming office or inheriting rank, to the plans of the post-office department, to the rules of military examination and discipline, and to the rates and enrolment of actual service, shall be reported to this board, in order to regulate the hinge of State." Thus the Manchu Government recog-

nized the fact that its control in China turned upon the discipline and efficiency of the army, and the Board of War was the most important department in the State. The post-office system was put under its control, and to this day the only means for the transmission of mails throughout China is found in the courier service of the Board of War. The statement makes curious reading to-day, that, within the post-office bureau was a minor office, called "the office for the announcement of victories." Its post-riders were furnished with the swiftest horses, most frequent relays, and best equipments. The imperial flag, borne on the saddle-bow, announced their mission, and cleared the way before them. Alas for China! This office has long since retired from business. And that "hinge of State," the Board of War, through overmuch regulation, and utter lack of wise administration, has rusted to such a degree that it turns no longer, and almost holds the door against the necessary self-defence of the nation. To change the figure for another not less expressive, it is no longer a locomotive engine, but rather an air-brake.

The active officers of the Board of War consist of two Presidents and four Vice-Presidents, with a vast array of minor authorities, attaches, and

clerks beneath them. Above these Presidents, and exercising supervisory functions merely, is placed a "General Superintendent of the Board of War," and he is a member of the Chinese Cabinet, or Privy Council, as it is more commonly called. He may be either a Chinese or a Manchu. Of the two Presidents, one is Manchu and one Chinese. Of the four Vice-Presidents, two are Manchu and two Chinese. This rule of equal division between the two races applies to the active heads of all the six boards, into which the administrative functions of the government are divided. It is noteworthy as another evidence of the fair-minded and impartial policy of the reigning family. There is no reason to believe that it affects the efficiency of the service in any manner.

The Presidents of the Board of War are generally elderly and amiable gentlemen of high scholastic and literary attainments, graduates, of course, of the government civil service examinations, and who have filled all the lower grades of civil office. It is too true that a large majority of them have proved to be inefficient and incapable, incumbrances rather than incumbents. One venerable gentleman who held the position for many years, and was then promoted to similar duty in the Treasury Board, was noted for his

"wine capacity," as Prince Kung expressed it. He was also distinguished as a poet, though his verses, elegant as they were, could not be said to possess a martial tone. A more energetic colleague once complained of this President, that his only labor at the Board of War was to drink rice wine, sleep, and eat melon seeds. At the same time, foreigners must find a certain difficulty in the criticism of unfit appointments of this class by the Chinese Government. In no other country are they made upon the sole ground of special fitness. Citizens of the United States cannot have forgotten the story told of an excellent old man, a merchant, who, having been appointed Secretary of the Navy, set his foot for the first time on board ship, and discovered, to his immense astonishment, that the vessel was hollow.

The Board of War at Peking has become, what Dickens so graphically described, a barnacle office. Its duty, as practically performed, consists in passing upon questions which it does not understand, as they are referred to it by the throne for report. It advises the purchase of arms which no officer of the board ever saw, and of the use of which, if seen, none could venture even a guess. It furnishes, upon demand, long rolls of enlisted men, scattered throughout the empire, many of whom are dead, and more of whom never

lived. It is, in the highest degree, improbable that the empire has one-fourth as many enlisted men to-day as the records and reports of the War Board call for. It reports equipments of bows and arrows, spears and matchlocks for these soldiers, in sublime ignorance of the fact that these things, except in museums and perhaps in Ashanti, were lost to sight more than a century ago. It reports and recommends officers who come fresh from their Confucian studies or from civil office, and who know neither strategy, tactics, the sword exercise, nor the manual of arms. The board is not responsible for this last absurdity. There are no other available officers in the empire. Necessarily its reports require to be handled with the utmost care, lest they fall into rags. Their only safety consists in the fact that they are placed before a cabinet and an emperor as remote from modern life as the board itself. Naval matters also are handled by the Board of War. Shortly after the conclusion of the war with Japan, it was naïvely proposed that this branch of its duties be abandoned, as there was no work remaining to be done!

The fact is that China needs an army, but has none. She has, for the most part, a rabble who do not know how to fight, led by men who do not know how to lead, and all equipped and handled

under a system adopted two and a half centuries ago, and which has known no change since. The situation is grotesque in time of peace, pitiable when the empire needs to be defended. Let the situation at Peking, under the very eye of the Emperor, and in the presence of the Board of War, serve at once as illustration and proof.

The capital is situated upon an alluvial plain which stretches from the sea—the Gulf of Pechihli—to the “Western Hills,” which form the flanks of a plateau. It is distant about fifteen miles from these hills, and there are no elevations higher than grave mounds within seven or eight miles of it. The city is only about one hundred feet above sea level. It is one hundred and eleven miles from the sea at Taku, and eighty-five miles from Tientsin, its seaport and the point nearest to it, which can be reached by vessels of more than two or three feet draught. Peking is surrounded by a wall some thirty miles in extent, seventy feet high, sixty feet thick at the top, and more than eighty feet thick at the ground level. The outer and inner faces are about four feet in thickness, and composed of mammoth brick laid in pure lime. Centuries of time have hardened the brick to the consistency of stone. The interior of the wall is composed of a mixture of loess and pure lime in equal parts,

poured in wet, and rammed down as it hardened. It is strengthened, at intervals of one hundred and eighty feet, with deep buttresses uniform in height and construction with the wall itself. The top is paved and protected by a crenelated parapet. The main city wall is provided with nine gates, each of which is defended by a half-circle enceinte, and surmounted by a tower, loopholed and galieried. The provisions for defence are such that assailants of each outer gate are themselves liable to be assailed upon three sides, while any attack upon an inner gate can be defended from the front, rear, and both flanks. Each corner of the wall is protected by a tower similar to those at the gates. It is kept throughout in a condition of good repair. A moat of no importance encloses the whole. The water supply is ample, furnished by innumerable wells scattered throughout the city. The food supply could not readily be cut off. There are millions of bushels of rice permanently stored within the city, and renewed each year. A still larger quantity is contained in extensive granaries just without the walls, and could be brought within the gates in case of an anticipated siege. There are no extensive suburbs without the city to furnish cover for attack and embarrass the defence.

At the time of its establishment and for cen-



turies thereafter, the Chinese capital was impregnable against any known weapons of assault. And with all the modern methods and appliances of war, high military authority has declared that it only can be successfully assailed by means of mines and heavy artillery.

Peking is under military control exclusively, Manchu. The "Governor of the Nine Gates," as he is called, is a high official, and generally a member of the Imperial Clan, or family. The police are Manchu soldiers. The viceroy of the province of Chihli, in which the capital is situated, is forbidden to approach within ten miles of the gates, without the command or permission of the Emperor. There are certainly more than a half million Manchus living in the city of Peking, and in suburban villages, or cantonments near at hand. They have resided there for generations, have forgotten their native tongue, and have become genuine Pekingese. Under a strictly military system, they are divided, first, under eight banners or flags, each being in command of a general. Those under each banner are divided into groups of a thousand families, each group being governed by an officer called a "Chien Shihhu," corresponding in rank to a colonel. Each group of a thousand families is divided again into groups of one hundred, and

each of these is under control of a "Po Shihhu," or captain. Last of all is a further division into groups of ten, each under a "Shih Shihhu," or non-commissioned officer. Every male member of each of these families who is within the military age limit is liable to be called to arms for the service or defence of the throne. And one member of each is required to be armed, equipped, drilled, to report for inspection and military exercise twice in each month, and, in general, to consider himself as on duty.

It would appear to a non-military observer that no fatal defects could be found in this system, and that the Emperor should have an army of at least 100,000 men, efficient in every respect, and ready for instant service, with a possible force of at least that number in reserve. It is only when one turns from the system to examine the practice that a most amazing state of facts is discovered. These Manchu soldiers are divided into infantry and cavalry, the proportions being of no importance, as each is more inefficient than the other, and neither of any service beyond that of frightening children. They are armed with bows and arrows, spears, matchlocks, and jingals. The reader will find a description of the last-named weapons in any good encyclopædia. The Manchu boys are taught archery before they are

of age to enter the service. But, unfortunately, they are instructed that a threatening posture in drawing the bow is of greater importance than accurate aim or hitting the target. And this is, substantially, the only drill they ever have. There is an extensive parade and evolution ground outside the north wall of the city. It is generally deserted. When occupied, the exercise is only perfunctory and nominal, serving no useful purpose. There is no exercise, no drill, no discipline, and no efficiency. The Chinese have many books upon the theory and practice of war, and a work entitled "The Soldier's Manual," though antiquated, is excellent in many ways. Yet in many years' residence in Peking, and much association with the defenders of the city, the writer never saw a copy of it.

An examination into the food and pay of these imperial troops subdues all amazement at their inefficiency, and discloses a complicated system of fraud and theft almost surpassing belief. The infantry soldier is entitled to receive four ounces of refined silver bullion each month and a ration of rice. The necessary funds for full payment are regularly issued by the Treasury Board. The ration is collected, as a tax in kind, in the rice-producing provinces of the empire, and transported to Peking by the government. It is so

adulterated in quality and reduced in amount between the public granaries and the private soldier that less than one-half of the nominal ration reaches him. His pay undergoes a process of sweating, repeated by each official through whose hands it passes, so effectual that he receives barely one-fourth of the amount which is his due. In 1878, the average amount actually paid to each soldier in Peking was nine-tenths of an ounce of silver. In other words, for each four ounces issued by the Treasury for the pay of the troops, three and one-tenth ounces were stolen. When it is understood that the pay and ration are supposed to cover the entire needs of a family, the resultant distress and hardship will be better understood. A trifle more than a dollar in gold and a ration insufficient for one was all, in that year, that intervened between a family, averaging at least five persons, and starvation! But the Imperial Treasury suffers at other hands than those of its official servants. The entire Manchu population is combined for a raid upon it. The names of men, dead for years, are still upon the rolls drawing pay and rations by proxy. Small children, even infants in arms, are reported as able-bodied veterans, and draw pay as such. Women do a nominal duty in the ranks and receive allowances for soldiers who never had an existence.

There are neither sides nor bottom to this pit of dishonesty and theft.

The results are such as might be expected. The better men in the ranks engage in some petty traffic, or become laborers, in order to maintain their families in decency. These arrange with substitutes to stand in the ranks for them when the company to which they belong is ordered to parade. But the majority of these soldiers, too proud to work and too unreliable for any employer, turn from one expedient to another, each more hopeless than the last. Their uniform, arms, accoutrements are pawned. Their very pay is pawned, and the rice ration sold in advance of issue. A dangerously large percentage of them, and especially of the petty officers, fall victims to the opium habit. Many of them drink, gamble, and loaf about, a terror to quiet people, a nuisance and a menace to the city. Yet, to this tatterdemalion crowd, without effective arms, without drill or discipline, without courage or energy—for a half-starved soldier is always a coward—must be entrusted the defence of the Chinese capital! As well man the walls with the average rabble of Chinese small boys, who conduct a warfare by calling names, making faces, and throwing stones! When one sees in the *Peking Gazette* a declaration from the throne that

“the Imperial Capital is the source of and centre of light and purity,” he realizes that bombast has at last reached its limit.

The body of men just described, with similar but smaller detachments maintained in a few important centres throughout the empire, comprises the entire Manchu army, and embraces all soldiers who are directly enlisted by the central government. In describing them, the worst has probably been said that can be said in criticism of the Chinese military force. In point of fact, the management of military affairs has drifted away from Peking altogether, and is vested in certain high provincial authorities. The capital is removed from the seaboard, little or none of the pressure and spur of danger has reached it in modern times, and hence the condition is worse there than elsewhere in China, excepting, possibly, the extreme western frontier.

While the government of China is theoretically despotic, there is a large degree of flexibility in its administration. This is notably true in the relations between the provinces and the central authority. There is nearly as much independence and freedom of action granted to the provincial governments as is found in the hands of the state officials in America. Perhaps the extreme point in this freedom from imperial control is to be

found where it would last be looked for—in the military system. Surely in no other country ruled by an alien race can there be found a situation so anomalous. Nowhere else could it be safely permitted. But in China is seen a Manchu emperor authorizing the viceroys and governors of the eighteen provinces to levy, arm and equip military forces, to drill, command and pay them, thus assuming finally authority over them and pledging their loyalty to the throne only by inference. As a large majority of the provincial authorities are Chinese, the alien ruler places the final power of defence, both of the empire and of his authority, in the hands of those whom he has conquered instead of retaining it within his own grasp.

Aside from the Manchu soldiers already described, the entire military force of the empire is provincial. Each viceroy and each independent governor has his own army, raised, equipped, and controlled under his own administration. In other words, there are some fifteen different armies in China, each independent of all the others, and all owing only to a nominal loyalty to the throne.

The utter impracticability of any such system is patent at a glance. There is no uniformity in the point of efficiency, equipment, in the size of

the forces, or in any other direction. In the sea-board provinces and in those lying along the lower Yangtze River can be found forces well drilled and equipped, well fed and disciplined, good soldiers in every sense of the term. In other provinces are to be seen regiments, so-called, to whom no injustice would be done by classing them even below the Manchu soldiers at Peking. No general description is possible. The writer has seen as fine a body of men under arms in China—saving only the lack of officers—as can be found elsewhere. And he has seen a ragged, disorderly gang of men, nominally on parade, each armed with fan and umbrella, one half bearing flags, and the other half armed indifferently with matchlocks and spears.

There is utter lack of uniformity in the arms and ammunition furnished and in the manœuvre. Lord Charles Beresford declares that in his visits to the different armies in the Chinese provinces, he counted fourteen different descriptions of rifles in use, ranging from the most modern type to the ancient jingal. In many instances, members of the same company were not equipped with the same style of weapon. Under such conditions, any joint action of troops from different provinces is dangerous and impossible.

While the forces, thus organized and con-



trolled, are liable to be summoned to duty anywhere within the empire, there is not infrequently opposition, reaching sometimes to open mutiny, when they are called to service beyond the limits of the province in which they were enlisted. The clannish spirit operates to prevent them from working well with troops from any other part of China. There is a question as to which province shall meet the expenses of a force thus taken beyond the limits of its ordinary sphere of action. More than once, when that question has been raised, the soldiers have been left, unpaid and unfed, to find their way in straggling bands back to their native province. And unoffending Chinese along their route have suffered more from their violence and ravages than from the actual horrors of war. Broken up into such a number of independent organizations, the Chinese army cannot do efficient police duty. Far less can it suppress insurrection or successfully defend the empire from invasion.

It is a significant fact that nearly the entire military appropriations in China during the past thirty years have been expended upon the defence of the coast and the lower Yangtze Valley. Two general officers have been placed by the Emperor in charge of the work. One is styled "The Northern Superintendent of Coast Defence," and

has his headquarters at Tientsin. The other is "The Southern Superintendent of Coast Defence," and is stationed at Nanking. To them and to two or three viceroys who have co-operated with them must be credited whatever attempts have been made to recast the Chinese military system, to create a navy, to place both in a condition of decent efficiency, and thus to enable their country to resist aggression, and hence to deserve and demand the respect of other powers. Confucius taught the rulers of China to conquer the surrounding tribes by showing them a model government, in which case their enemies would voluntarily do them homage and submit to their control. Undoubtedly this gentle theory was of practical force in ancient times, as the relations then existing between the Chinese and their neighbors plainly show. But the leaders of modern thought and action in the empire have discovered that times have changed and that the powers of to-day only respect those who are able to defend themselves and return blow for blow. Even had they the good government, it would have no more influence upon Western powers than the recitation of some cradle hymn upon a mad bull. Hence, in order to save China from becoming public plunder, they have been forced to put her in a posture of defence.

The notable leader in this effort has been Li Hung Chang. For many years he had direction of the northern coast defence which covered direct approaches to the capital. This fact, his successful military experience, and his recognized ability and character as a chief among men, have properly given great weight to his opinions, and, in most cases, have secured the adoption of his plans. He has labored under the most overwhelming difficulties. Some of his equals and superiors in rank in the Chinese Government have virulently opposed him from personal rivalry and dislike. Other high officials have interfered with his plans from motives of intense conservatism, maintaining that the weapons used in the days of Confucius could not be improved upon to-day. Still others, bitterly anti-foreign, while knowing well that the main purpose of all his efforts was the protection of their common country against foreign invasion, yet stupidly ignoring the wise rule to "fight fire with fire," have sought to cast odium upon him for adopting foreign methods and spending so much Chinese money for foreign guns and ships. During all the years of his service in the coast defence, he labored in a perfect network of intrigue and opposition along these lines. It tells much for his sincerity of purpose and power with the Imperial Government that he

was able to do anything against such a combination of hostile influences.

But these represent only a small fraction of the difficulties which hedged him about. Knowing no foreign tongue, the vast amount of information which he needed could only reach him filtered through interpreters or translators. It is hardly necessary to say that it was colored frequently to suit the purchased preference of some subordinate. There was a perennial stream of agents coming from all lands and the islands of the sea, all bound to the vice-regal office at Tientsin. Men with guns to sell, men with torpedoes to sell, men with ships to sell, men with rifles to sell, men with revolvers and ammunition, and swords and cavalry equipments, and infantry equipments, and artillery equipments, and medicines, and surgical implements, and salve and lint and bandages, and hospital supplies, and tents, and flags, and gunpowder and dynamite, men with all the crank and crazy inventions of all ages, men with patent schemes warranted to destroy a million of the enemy each minute of time and all done without danger—to the inventor—all these, and many unenumerated, hurried to Tientsin. Each man's gun was the best. Each man's torpedo was the only reliable instrument of modern warfare. Each man's ship was war-

ranted to outsail, outfright, and outram any other ship that ever floated upon the water. It needed neither sailors nor soldiers to man it. It was self-operative, and carried automatic death to all enemies of China.

[And the unfortunate Northern Superintendent of Coast Defence knew nothing of the comparative merits or virtues of any of these marvellous appliances of modern war. The agents made friends of his subordinates and interpreters. They bribed clerks and doorkeepers. They interviewed his cook and flattered his barber. They sought consular and even diplomatic assistance. They expended money, in the more delicate way, by making costly presents, and in the more direct and grosser form of bribery—all of which was eventually to be included and recouped in the price. And in this same way, pledges of extravagant commissions were made to persons having access to and influence with His Excellency, contingent upon successful negotiation. The result of which was to increase the cost to China of articles purchased far beyond the proper limit, and to teach new forms of dishonesty to those sufficiently well versed in the practice. When it was found impossible to effect a sale at a price thus exaggerated, lower terms were accepted, and inferior and discarded articles were

substituted for those which had passed a government test, as required by contract. And this was sometimes done even without that excuse. Upon one occasion a number of guns were ordered from Europe, through an agent at Tientsin, for the armament of the forts at Taku. In due time they arrived and were placed in position. Upon being fired for the first time, three of them exploded in succession, killing a number of soldiers and wounding many others. A close examination by a foreign expert disclosed the fact that not one of the guns was properly constructed or could be used with safety. A large quantity of discarded and condemned rifles were sold to the Chinese Government at prices which would be extravagant for the best and most modern arm. This was accomplished sometimes through the cupidity of petty military officers, but more often through their ignorance.

Still other difficulties arose from the lack of officers and men familiar with modern weapons, and competent to care for and use them when purchased. In some cases, expensive military machines were wantonly rendered worthless by petty officials, who had either not been bribed by the agent who sold them or had been "seen" by a rival agent. But in the great majority of instances, ignorance, carelessness, and neglect were

thus responsible for the destruction of large quantities of expensive government property. Viceroy Li was continually listening to the urgent advice of diplomatic and consular officials, sometimes disinterested and sometimes not, upon the importance of procuring modern arms; the agent body brought an intense pressure upon him to purchase; large funds were in hand for that purpose; the imperial authorities were eager to see something done to protect the coast near Peking; and his own anxieties lay in the same direction. Under such combination of pressure, it is not to be wondered at that he should have made extensive purchases of war material, overlooking the fact, peculiarly true of modern arms, that officers and men, trained and skilful in the use and care of weapons and war material, should first be provided.

But just there lay the crucial point of the entire business of recreating a Chinese army and navy. So long as her supply of funds lasted, China could purchase anything needed for either. The whole civilized world was eager to supply her. But she could not purchase trained officers and disciplined soldiers in any market. They must be bred and educated in China, raised from among her own people. There was no lack of consideration of this branch of his task on the

part of Viceroy Li. It was this that led him, in co-operation with the Southern Superintendent of Coast Defence, to adopt a plan proposed by Yung Wing of sending a considerable number of Chinese boys to the United States for education. One hundred and twenty boys from middle-class families, averaging about nine years of age, were thus sent, under suitable control and care. The important purpose of this educational mission, as it was called, was, after the necessary preliminary studies had been passed, to select the most talented among the students, and divide them between the government academies at West Point and Annapolis. In this way it was hoped that thirty or forty trained military officers and an equal number of naval officers would be secured. The scheme was most carefully devised, was put into operation in 1872, and, up to a certain point, was remarkably successful. No equal number of students from any part of the world, sent abroad at such an age and under the same conditions, would have made a higher record than did these protégés of the Chinese Government.

While this plan was in operation, Viceroy Li requested an eminent military officer to draft a detailed plan for a military school for China. The request was provisionally granted, but on the necessary reference being made by the officer to



his own government, he received a mild rebuke, with the added remark that it was the wish of that power "to aid the Chinese only in the peaceable pursuits of commerce." In 1878, when certain of the Chinese students were qualified to enter West Point or Annapolis, the government made request of the proper authorities at Washington for their admission. But the question of Chinese immigration was creeping into politics upon the Pacific Coast, the two great parties were somewhat closely balanced throughout the country, and no official in Washington was found ready to secure that action by Congress, without which aliens cannot be admitted to those academies. This was peculiarly unfortunate in its effect upon the Chinese, as Japanese students were known to be pursuing their studies in the Naval Academy at that time. After renewing their request at intervals for three years, the Chinese authorities abandoned the scheme, and recalled the students to their native land. /

Efforts made to secure foreign instructors for military or naval schools in China can hardly be said to have resulted more successfully. And the cause of failure has not been always, or entirely, with the Chinese. The difficulties in the way of success have been very great. It is almost impossible to communicate instruction, es-

pecially of any technical sort, by means of an interpreter. Yet instructors who knew Chinese were unobtainable, and there were practically no students in the empire who were familiar with any foreign tongue. Nor were there any modern military or naval text-books in Chinese.)

There were other and unnecessary difficulties preliminary to these. There were rivalry and competition, intrigue and wire-pulling, arising in some cases to the dignity of diplomatic correspondence, on the part of European governments represented at Peking, each eager to secure for some native of its own country any prominent or influential position which the viceroy proposed to fill with a foreigner. Though not in the military or naval service, the position of Inspector-General of Customs, filled so long and with such distinguished ability by Sir Robert Hart, may well furnish an example. For the past fifteen years, the question of his successor has been the foundation of almost continuous squabbles—they deserve no better word—to the great embarrassment and annoyance of the Chinese Government. Great Britain demands that the post be filled by a British subject, Russia claims it, Germany has a candidate, and France gestures in the background. What China may prefer receives no consideration. The proceeding resembles far

more closely the struggle between the heirs of a dead person over the appointment of an administrator to his estate than the selection of some competent person whose sole aim should be to render loyal service to the government which employs him. Intrigue does not cease when any appointment of a foreigner has been made. Petty Chinese officials combine to thwart his plans and prevent his success. And these have, on too many occasions, received foreign assistance.

{ Foreign appointees have sometimes reached their posts of duty with the most grossly exaggerated ideas of the importance of their positions, ideas quite unwarranted by the terms of contract or by any statements made to them. They have assumed the right to decide from whom they would consent to receive orders, and to judge for themselves whether orders, even when thus received, should or should not be obeyed. It is hardly necessary to say that the employment of such men has always ended in disastrous failure. Some years ago Viceroy Li engaged two foreign military officers as instructors at Tientsin. They were under contract for a term of five years, at salaries far larger than any sum they had ever received before, their expenses to and from China being also allowed them. One had only seen so

much military service as would come within the knowledge of an assistant paymaster of troops. The other had obtained the rank of lieutenant in the armies of his country, had been invited to resign therefrom, and, at the time of making his Chinese engagement, was conducting a small manufactory of cigarettes. When these gentlemen reached Tientsin, they declined to receive orders from any other authority than Viceroy Li, and claimed military rank next to him. After wasting eighteen months in argument and entreaty, during which time they performed no duty but that of receiving their monthly salaries, a proposition was submitted to them that they cancel their contracts and return home upon receipt of full pay for half the time specified, and travelling expenses each way. They declined. They would only return home upon receipt of their salaries for the full term of five years, and the expenses of the journey. They were sustained in this position by their diplomatic and consular authorities, to whom appeal was made by the Chinese. And in this manner their engagement was finally ended.

Upon the close of the war between China and Japan, the Southern Superintendent of Coast Defence engaged a number of German officers as instructors and organizers of a military force at

Nanking. They too were under contract for a term of years at far higher rates of compensation than they had ever received before. Only one or two of them had held official rank in the German army. The remainder had held only petty rank, and were of no value excepting as drill-masters. They were under no subordination among themselves, each having been engaged independently and owing no obedience to the others. From the time of their arrival at Nanking they lived in a condition of almost chronic drunkenness, were seldom fit for any duty, and continually insulted and abused peaceable Chinese upon the public streets. Popular feeling was excited against them by this conduct, and when they broke open private residences, and attempted assault upon Chinese wives and mothers, they were attacked by a mob and narrowly escaped the death they fully deserved. These are the facts of the "ferocious assault upon German officers by a Chinese mob," so widely heralded throughout America and Europe at the time. And the viceroy at Nanking rid himself of his German employés with as little pecuniary loss to the government and as little noise as possible.

Meshed in such an entanglement of envy, ignorance, superstition, antique ideas, impracticable theories, open and concealed treachery, bribe

giving and taking, conflicting interests and interested counsel, without reliable means of access to necessary knowledge, without skilled advisers or subordinates among his own people, the only wonder is that the efforts of Viceroy Li resulted in anything other than unqualified failure. Yet he accomplished much of practical value to China in military and naval matters, and much in many other directions not to be noticed here. Those who admire genius, ability, and tenacity of purpose may well bow to the great Chinese viceroy as one of the world's heroes.

Prior to 1862 China had no navy. A few small and unwieldy junks, intended only for coast duty, equipped with small cast-iron guns, dangerous only to the sailors on board, and not even able to run away with a fair rate of speed—these, and a host of small river craft propelled by oars, and mounting one cast-iron gun each, intended for the suppression of piracy and smuggling, completed the list of her vessels of war. In the year named, the Peking authorities decided to procure two or three modern ships as the beginning of a new navy. And the experience to which they were subjected, at the very outset of their efforts to provide means of defence upon the high seas, falls into place here. To accomplish this purpose they sent Mr. Horatio N. Lay, for-

merly a British consular officer, but then in the employ of the Chinese customs, to England as their agent, with the necessary instructions and funds. It soon became evident that Mr. Lay had ideas of his own. He notified the Chinese authorities that he had fixed upon a national ensign for the new navy, that it was to be "a green flag, bearing a yellow diagonal cross." And he requested that the Emperor issue a decree to that effect in the *Peking Gazette*. Prince Kung, then regent of the empire, notified Mr. Lay that the Chinese ensign would be "of yellow ground, and on it will be designed a dragon with his head toward the upper part of the flag."

Mr. Lay returned to China with the new fleet in the early summer of 1863. It then appeared that, instead of securing the two or three ships as directed, he had purchased seven men-of-war and a store-ship. They were manned throughout with British officers and crews, all engaged at high wages for the new Chinese navy. As commodore of the fleet, Captain Sherrard Osborne had been commissioned. And an exceedingly interesting agreement had been entered upon between the commodore and Mr. Lay, under the terms of which the former was to obey no orders received from any other authority than the Emperor of China, which orders to be valid must be counter-

signed by the latter. And Mr. Lay, upon his part, promised and agreed to countersign no orders unless they appeared to him "to be reasonable"! It hardly seems possible, but there were those who held that China should be forced to accept and pay for this fleet, and employ it subject to these terms and conditions. She declined to do either. And thanks to the good sense of the British Minister and the good offices of the United States representative, the officers and crews were sent home to England and the vessels disposed of. Mr. Lay did not continue in the service of the Chinese Government.

It is a serious mistake to suppose that the Chinaman lacks the qualities which make a good soldier. He is sober, obedient, doggedly persistent, and easily controlled. He possesses much of that fatalism which made the soldiers of Mahomet so reckless of danger. The Chinese soldier has proved his courage upon so many occasions, that it should be questioned no longer. Always called upon in modern times to face modern repeating rifles and Maxim guns, armed with matchlocks and spears, or with modern arms in the use of which he had not been trained, furnished not infrequently with ammunition fitted to another weapon than that which he carried, without officers competent to lead, half fed,



clothed in rags, undisciplined, he still has given many examples of splendid bravery. Well fed, well clothed, well disciplined and well led, the Chinese soldier will prove himself entirely competent and ready to protect his native land. And, other things being equal, if the ratio of fighting men to the total population is the same in China as in the United States, she is able to put 60,000,000 of men into the field.

But, in addition to fatal defects of organization and administration already pointed out, there are no skilled officers in either the military or naval branch of the service. Until these are trained, and have trained their men, any efficient defence of the empire is impossible. To those who knew the man, the last days of brave old Admiral Ting, of the Chinese navy, make a most pathetic picture, and furnish proof of what has just been said. Able, conscientious, and patriotic, he knew little of modern naval warfare beyond what had come to him by practical experience, after he was past middle life. He knew the tremendous power of the fleet placed under his command during the war with Japan. And he knew that he did not know how to bring that power into full effect against the enemy. He knew that his men would fight, but that he did not know how to use them. Under the stress of these feelings, and as

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he was on the point of leaving Wei Hai Wei to engage once more in battle, he received a cowardly order from Peking to remain in harbor. Then he took his own life.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE MISSIONARY.

AMONG the varied forces operating in China like yeast in flour, the Christian missionary must be given a prominent position. And, for the purposes of this volume, the material, intellectual, and moral effects of his presence and teaching must be kept clearly in mind, as well as those which are purely religious.


Much hostile comment upon their work is rife in so-called Christian lands—more perhaps than among the Chinese themselves. Some of these criticisms are flippant and malicious. They come from a class of foreigners—small it is to be hoped—whose lives and business constitute a menace to society and a reproach to civilization. Naturally they do not love the missionaries, for the labors of the latter are not likely to increase the sales of opium and ardent spirits among the Chinese, or to prosper any other forms of vice. The comments of these gentlemen deserve but

slight notice. The Chinese question does not furnish the first occasion in which the wolf has accused the lamb of roiling the water, nor is it likely to be the last.

Another class of objectors to the presence of the missionary in China deserve more serious consideration. Some among them insist that the missionary is ahead of his time, and hence out of place in China. They argue that modern civilization and commerce should first be allowed to do their work, and then the missionary might follow and reap his harvest. Just how much might be left for him to glean and to garner after these two forces had done their work, the advocates of the policy have, perhaps, not seriously considered. With opium as the chief cornerstone upon which the fabric of British commerce in China has been builded; with an eager, selfish spirit of money-getting, ready to pander to every native vice, and to import even grosser vices from abroad so long as the Chinese can pay the bill; with object lessons in drunkenness, gambling, and adultery, found thick in every centre of foreign trade in China, the question may well be raised and repeated: What would be left for the missionary to gather after a non-christian civilization and an unchristian commerce had done their work and reaped their har-

vest? That the Christian missionary invariably finds his best field and greatest success in interior districts, where the presence and habits of some commercial foreigners have not prejudiced the Chinese against everything from abroad, is a humiliating fact. But it furnishes an answer, final and destructive, to the theory above mentioned.

The Chinese, as a nation, possess a high standard of morals. Whether they invariably live up to it is a question not pertinent to the argument. They measure foreigners by it, at least, as closely as themselves. That distinguished Englishman, Burke, wrote: "Our manners, our civilization, and all the good things connected with manners and with civilization, have, in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles: the spirit of a gentleman and the spirit of religion." Which is to say that the highest type and most perfect product of true civilization is a Christian gentleman. And the commercial exponent of true Western civilization and the Christian teacher must work together. Nothing can be more preposterously untrue than the assertion of a prominent English writer, who, speaking of the missionaries in China, says: "But with their lives they risk the cause of civilization." Scarcely less absurd is his declaration



that "the manner in which the missionaries have been smuggled into the country against the will of the people, and the injudicious methods by which they have sought to establish their religion, are mainly responsible for the anti-foreign feeling which is so subversive of our (British) interests in the Far East." The same writer glosses over and excuses the hideous opium traffic, as being the scapegoat for other events. But these questions will receive notice in other portions of this volume.

It is, however, desirable to notice here one other sweeping assertion made by this same authority. He attributes all the absurd stories of the immorality of foreigners, and missionaries especially, to the fact that large numbers of young women have been sent out to labor among their own sex in China, and that they travel around under the escort of a man. Then he adds: "In the opinion of the Chinese, the proper place for women is the domestic hearth, and no good is likely to come of taking her out of her sphere—a lesson which the men of the West are learning by bitter experience." Fortunately this gentleman is an Englishman! The writer will yield to none in urging that the missionary should pay a decent regard to the customs and prejudices of the people among whom he labors. Much of

his success depends upon his doing so, and possibly sufficient care is not always exercised upon this point. But the very sweeping statements made in the paragraph from which this criticism is taken affect all foreigners who may be in China. And if the ideas of the gentleman were followed, each foreign home in that empire must be transformed into a harem, or all wives and other foreign ladies must be sent out of the country.

It is unquestionably true that very mistaken notions and ideas are entertained by the Chinese when they *first* see the free and friendly manner in which Americans and Europeans of the two sexes associate. But the Chinese are not stupid nor slow to discover facts and draw correct inferences. And when a little time has passed and these same Chinese see that no evil nor immoral results have come; that these single women are neither bawds nor concubines, but lead lives of the highest morality; that the wives are equally intelligent with their husbands, their companions and advisers, instead of playthings and servants; then these same Chinese admit a new idea, and the change needed more than any other in China, the elevation of woman, begins to work in their minds. If the missionaries in that vast empire had accomplished nothing more during the half

century past than to furnish object lessons of the true position of woman, and the highest type of Christian homes, that result alone would justify their presence in China and the money invested in the enterprise.

In the course of a long conversation with a high Chinese official, whose name need not be mentioned, upon the broad differences between the ideas and customs of the East and the West, that official said to the writer: "In one matter you are unquestionably right and we are altogether wrong. We treat our wives and daughters as though they were animals, rather than human beings; you make no discrimination between your sons and your daughters, giving both the same treatment and the same education. Of course, China cannot produce able and progressive men when the mothers have, for many hundred years, been kept stupid and without any education. I believed as every other Chinaman did about women, until I met some of your foreign ladies and saw your homes. Then I knew that upon that point we were all wrong, and I saw that China would never change for the better until the mothers were educated and intelligent. In that matter I have adopted the foreign custom. I have three sons and two daughters, and I give the latter exactly the same treatment and the



same education as the former. In that you are right and we are wrong. But I am obliged to use great caution and to conceal the fact that my daughters are being schooled. Were it known, I should be accused of following a foreign custom, which would cause me serious trouble, and might result in the loss of my rank and official position."

Work among the Chinese women, whether educational, medical, social, or religious, can only be done by persons of their own sex. The criticism of and opposition to the presence of female missionaries in China, made by persons solely interested in the development of commerce there, are short-sighted even from their own standpoint, and in view of their own interests. In point of fact, the entire missionary body is a most valuable ally to every form of legitimate foreign trade. While their purpose is religious, they are, unconsciously perhaps, yet of necessity, true, unpaid "commercial agents." They speak the language, which is never the fact with merchants; they penetrate and reside in interior districts which the merchant never reaches; their houses and contents, their clothing, utensils and appliances of every sort, constitute, at each mission station, and as they travel, a miniature exposition of the thousand and one conveniences and com-

forts which foreigners possess and which they lack. Wonder gives place to admiration, admiration to the desire to possess. Millions of the natives of China never knew how uncomfortable they were, how much they lacked, until brought thus to compare their crude inventions and clumsy appliances with the immeasurably superior articles brought into their midst by the missionaries. Before any man can be elevated, he must first be made discontented. As the agent of a wholesome discontent, the missionary is an invaluable aid to commerce. He probably brings far more customers to the foreign merchant than converts to his own system of faith, however successful he may be in his direct work.

It is far too commonly believed that missionaries are at once the main cause and the special object of the anti-foreign feeling, so universal and so intense throughout China. The facts sustain no such belief. Missionaries, as such, have had little to do with this bitter and persistent hostility to foreigners among the Chinese. They have suffered heavily from it, but it is not of their creation. Christianity is objected to, not so much because it is Christianity as because it is a Western religion. And those who preach it are objectionable to the Chinese, not as preachers of a new faith, but as foreigners. What is the real

root of this anti-foreign feeling may be pointed out later on. But it is not to be found in the calling, conduct, or labors of the missionary. In cases where the feeling appears to be peculiarly directed against this class, investigation will invariably develop the fact that their religious calling is believed to be a mere cloak, and that they are really secret foreign political agents. While this whole question has been put wrong end foremost most industriously, there can be no mistake as to the facts. Any person who has moved familiarly among all classes of the Chinese, and conversed with them in their own tongue, must know that this is true.

Naturally the literati are not friendly to the missionaries. The latter represent new ideas, a new education, and a new national life, each of which is inimical to their pretensions. They hate them as foreigners, and especially as the class of foreigners whose labors threaten most directly the ascendancy of their influence over China. So far as the Christian religion is concerned, the feeling of the literati is merely one of utter indifference. This was most plainly shown in the Parliament of Religions held in connection with the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893. Pung Kwang Yu, a commissioner from China and a distinguished Confucianist, was requested to rep-

resent and expound his faith in the Parliament. In the conclusion of his statements, which cover some seventy pages of closely printed matter, he said: "As I have said before, the progress of Christianity does not concern Confucianists in the least." A very large proportion of the literati are utter disbelievers in any cult or religion—agnostics in the strongest sense of the word. Thus, sitting beside a member of the literary class one afternoon in a chapel in Peking, and listening to an earnest explanation of the Christian faith, the writer overheard his neighbor say: "Wo ch'uan puh hsin. Ch'ih pao la, chio hao la." "I do not believe a word of it. Let a man eat to the full and he is all right."

It is not to be questioned that mobs and violent disturbances in China are more frequently directed against missionaries than other foreigners. The explanation of this fact is very simple. All other classes of foreigners live at the treaty ports under the guns or within easy reach of the ubiquitous man-of-war. They have little direct connection with the masses of Chinese, and seldom or never come into contact with them. And those Chinese who do live at the ports have learned, by bitter experience, the danger of troubling the foreigner. Only very exceptional circumstances can arouse them to any acts of vio-

lence. The missionaries alone live in interior districts, in little groups, beyond military or naval protection, and with no means of defence. They are in direct contact with the natives, and are the first, because the handiest, victims to any anti-foreign uprising.

And so, again, the charge and complaint against Chinese who have become Christians—Protestant or Roman Catholic—is not that they have apostatized from the Confucian, or Buddhist, or Taoist cult, but that “*they have become foreigners.*” They have deserted their country. This sentiment among the Chinese may be called intense and jealous patriotism, nationalism, pride of race, or whatever else the reader may choose, but it is their connection with the foreigners, not with Christianity, which forms the gravamen of the charge against converts, and for which imaginary renunciation of China, many have been called upon to die.

Here again is evidence that any opposition to the missionary which may exist among the Chinese is aroused not so much by his teaching as by his nationality. A suspicion of some sort, not originating in, but attaching to him, a fear of ulterior motives and results, created and kept alive by something entirely apart from his calling, and for which he is in no sense responsible—to

these must be charged all active dislike of the missionary and his work. Walls, built by the supposedly hostile purposes and designs of others, hedge him away from the confidence of the people. He suffers because of the land from which he comes and the company which he keeps.

There is no sufficient ground for the assertion, sometimes made, that missionaries have been smuggled into the interior of China, against the will of the government and people, by taking advantage of the interpolation of a spurious clause in the French treaty of 1858. It is a fact that a spurious clause was added to the Chinese text of that treaty by a French missionary, who was acting as interpreter. The body of the article, thus meddled with, provided that missionaries, being engaged in philanthropic work, should, together with their converts, receive the protection of the Chinese Government. It conceded no specific right of residence in the interior. The interpolated clause contained these words: "It is, in addition, permitted to French missionaries to rent and purchase land in the interior, and to construct buildings thereupon at their convenience." As has been stated, this spurious provision was added to the Chinese text only, and not to the French, which was made the official or authorized version in all cases of discrepancy between the

two. The forgery was discovered at once, was of no value, as the French text of the treaty alone was authoritative, and was never taken advantage of, directly or indirectly, by either the American, British, or French governments. The French Minister at Peking officially notified the Chinese authorities that his government recognized the spurious character of this clause, and would claim no rights under it.

In point of fact, the interpolation was an act of useless and unnecessary dishonesty, even under the plea that the end justifies the means. This can be readily shown. In A.D. 1724, the Roman Catholic missionaries, who had built up a large and influential following in China, were expelled from the country, being charged with seeking to interfere with affairs of state, and with disobedience of the commands of the Emperor. The property of the Church, amounting to many millions of dollars in value, was either confiscated by the government or taken possession of, without legal process, by individuals. In a French treaty with China, made some twelve years prior to that of Tientsin mentioned above, it had been agreed by the Chinese Government that all such property, upon proper identification and proof of ownership, should be restored "to the congregations of Chinese Christians" to whom it had be-

longed. Under this stipulation, property of immense value in the aggregate was restored to the Roman Catholic Church in China, and bishops and priests were placed in possession of it. In this way were Catholic missionaries reintroduced to the interior of China. If there was anything irregular or unexpected by the Chinese in the issue of this transaction, which must be doubted, it lies in the restoration of the property to the hands of foreign priests and bishops, instead of "to the congregations of Chinese Christians" as provided for in the treaty. The "favored nation clause," found in all treaties with China, opened the way for Protestant missionaries to follow the Catholic. The notorious interpolated clause in the French treaty of 1858 has played no part whatever in the establishment of missionaries in interior districts.

Whether the right might now be claimed by prescription in favor of missionary residence in the interior, is a question which, so far as the writer is aware, has never been raised by the United States. It is not the policy of our government to exact special rights or favors for any particular class or calling. It protects and safeguards the interests of all alike who pursue honest undertakings, upon the single basis of citizenship. And there are manifest reasons why the



government should make no exception to this policy in favor of missionaries in China. The suspicion that they were in reality secret political agents would solidify into positive conviction. They would then be the objects of special jealousy and distrust by officials and people alike. From the standpoint of missionary success itself, any discrimination in favor of that calling is most seriously to be deprecated. Special favors or privileges granted by the Chinese Government may materially facilitate the work of the preacher of Christianity, and add to his success. But special favors shown him by his own government are inevitably and invariably harmful.

It has always been a serious question whether the "article of toleration" found in the earlier treaties with China did not represent an act of un-wisdom, as singling out the missionary from his fellow-foreigners, and apparently according special rights to him, which might have been equally well secured in the general article dealing with the rights, privileges, and immunities accorded to his countrymen. Thus, while receiving less particular attention, he would be granted no less measure of protection. This question arose in the negotiation of the treaty between the United States and Korea—the first treaty made by that kingdom with any Western nation—with which

the writer had something to do. That distinguished Chinese statesman, Li Hung Chang, acted as friendly adviser to both parties in the negotiation. And it was due largely to his advice that no special article referring to missionaries was embodied in the treaty, their rights being effectually safeguarded in the manner above indicated. The records of missionary work in Corea furnish no argument against the wisdom of this action.

Apparently there has been no occasion for any foreign government to argue the question of the right of missionaries to reside and prosecute their work at interior points. That issue has not been raised by China, at least in recent years. Upon the other hand, nothing appears to have been formally conceded. But a wiser course than either official protest or concession has been followed by the Chinese Government. Recognizing the philanthropic motive and labors of the missionaries, it has allowed them to establish themselves wherever they might be able to do so with the tacit consent of the people of the locality. No fault can be found with this policy by the most ardent advocate of missions. It is at once wise, conservative, and tolerant. The missionaries are forced upon no one, they reach the fields most ready to receive them, the suspicion that

they are secret political agents finds nothing substantial upon which to feed, and they are granted all that they can wisely expect, a fair opportunity to do their work.

While the freedom of interior residence is granted to missionaries as a privilege rather than a right, the Chinese Government recognizes the fact that, having conceded such privilege, it is answerable for their protection from violence or molestation of any sort. It is, perhaps, sometimes slow to make peremptory demands upon local authorities for redress in these "missionary cases," as they are called, upon the same theory that leads a railway corporation to exempt itself from liability for injuries to a person who accepts a free pass. These cases are peculiarly vexatious and difficult of adjustment. They show a hostile public sentiment, aroused, not infrequently, by indiscreet acts of the missionaries themselves, who also sometimes expect more in the way of satisfaction than it would be either just or politic to exact. The Imperial Government is inclined to regard the matter as some local quarrel, which should be smoothed over and patched up upon the spot. It probably is also inclined to regard the outbreak of violence as a proof that the missionaries suffering from it have exceeded the privilege conceded to them by estab-

lishing themselves where they were not wanted, though no such idea may be expressed. In spite of all the complications and difficulties, a reasonable measure of reparation is almost invariably secured, either from the local authorities or at Peking.

If a balance were struck between the reparation granted by China for all acts of violence done by its people upon foreigners of all classes, and reparation granted by so-called Christian powers for all acts of violence against Chinese abroad or in China, that balance would not be largely against China. Our government has again and again secured pecuniary compensation from the Chinese Government for injuries done by mobs to the persons and property of American citizens. It has, properly, refused in nearly all such cases to treat with local officials, holding the central authority at Peking accountable. That authority has conceded the responsibility and satisfied our demands. When, in turn, the Chinese Minister at Washington has presented claims to our government for the lives and property of Chinese subjects destroyed by mob violence at various points in this country, the Secretary of State—coerced by the law, it is true—has referred him to a jury in the very county and town in which the wrong was done, chosen

from among the very men who were guilty of the act. Justice failing there, as was to be expected, and the Chinese Minister becoming importunate, after years of delay, Congress has appropriated money to pay these claims "as an act of charity and commiseration for the sufferers," and not as justice. And in more than one instance, when the President, through the Secretary of State, has called upon the governor of a State to grant protection or reparation to Chinese, he has been advised, by way of reply, not more polite or diplomatic than respectful, to mind his own business!

In many years of diplomatic service in China, in the course of which the writer had occasion to adjust a considerable number of so-called "missionary cases," and to discuss questions touching the presence of missionaries and their work in China, with all grades of officials in all parts of the empire, from the prince regent to a police magistrate, no single complaint of Protestant missionaries as a class, was brought to his knowledge. Censure of individual members of the body for indiscreet conduct or disregard of the customs and prejudices of the people were infrequently heard, but no complaint against them *en masse*, nor objection to their presence in the country. In January, 1875, the Chinese Cabinet laid

before the diplomatic body at Peking a voluminous document containing, in substance, two grievances. The principal one was the opium traffic. The other embodied complaints against Roman Catholic missionaries. They were charged with interference with local officials in the discharge of their duties, when a convert was accused of crime, and violation of some of the important sumptuary laws of the empire. Thus, it was asserted that some of the priests and bishops adopted the official costume, and even wore garments of the imperial yellow, which color none but the Emperor might use.

Upon the other hand, and aside from the right of residence in the interior, much assistance and many important and valuable favors have been granted to missionaries by all grades of officials in all parts of the empire. They have given large sums of money to Christian schools and hospitals, have been present and made appreciative addresses at the laying of the corner-stones, and at the opening of buildings devoted to educational and medical work. In more than one instance, they have established hospitals, placed them under the care of missionaries, and assumed the entire cost of maintenance. And this has been done with full knowledge that Christianity would be taught in the hospitals, and that at least

as much time would be given to the Bible in the schools as to the Confucian classics.

While this official assistance naturally has been directed to the educational and medical work, many instances might be given of the cordial appreciation and regard for missionaries as a body, and for all branches of their calling. One Chinese viceroy requested that United States passports issued to missionaries might specify their occupation, in order that special protection and facilities might be granted them. This could not be done, as a wise regulation forbids any such discrimination. Upon one occasion of trouble between China and France, the authorities of a province asked all American missionaries to display the United States flag upon their premises, as an easy method of identification, and an aid to the officials in securing them from harm. In the adjustment of "missionary cases," while the local authorities have sometimes been reluctant and dilatory, in many others they have been not merely just, but generous and liberal, restoring even more than had been destroyed, and, by their words and actions, assuring quietness and popular favor to the missionaries for years to come.

It would be strange indeed if the government or people of China should pursue a bigoted and

intolerant policy in matters of religion. For the Chinese are not given to the reversal of precedents. And the records of at least two thousand years of their history show an almost uniform course of toleration, and, at times, even of special favor, toward all forms of religious belief, regardless of their source. The few exceptions to this policy, and the accompanying persecutions, have invariably grown out of the charge, often too well founded, of disloyalty to the empire and interference with affairs of state. In the two notable instances, to be mentioned shortly, the Chinese Emperor sought to crush, not religious belief, but political intrigue. And this accords exactly with the statement already made that any opposition to missionaries in modern times is due to the suspicion that they are political agents, and not at all to their religious teaching.

Zoroastrianism—the faith of the Parsees in India to-day—existed in China centuries before the Christian era. One emperor of the famous Han dynasty elevated Confucianism to a cult. His successor, moved, as some say, by a thrice-repeated dream, or, as others claim, by a declaration of Confucius, that a sage would be found in the West, sent a special embassy in search of the new light. This deputation wandered into India and returned with Buddhism. The new belief was



welcomed, and to-day numbers its adherents among the Chinese by the hundreds of millions. Mohammedans came into China from Persia nearly two thousand years ago. There are many millions of them through all Northern and Western China, following their religion and living in peace. There are twenty-four Mohammedan mosques in Peking alone. And their places of worship are found in every large city throughout one-half of the empire. A Mohammedan rebellion sprung up in Western China in 1862, which continued a number of years, and developed into an iconoclastic crusade against Buddhism. Eventually suppressed, the leaders were treated with great moderation, being only required to live in peace with followers of other beliefs, and to post a prayer for the Emperor of China upon the wall in each mosque.

The Nestorian form of Christianity was introduced into China as early as A.D. 505. The first knowledge of silk and the silkworm was carried thence to Constantinople by monks of this order in A.D. 552. The Emperor, Tai Tsung, received the preachers of this faith with respect, ordered a temple for their use to be erected at his capital, and examined their religious books. The Nestorian faith spread throughout China, flourished for centuries, had emperors among its adherents,


and the highest officials in the land among its membership, and only became extinct about A.D. 1400. The famous Nestorian Tablet, erected during the reign and by the orders of the Emperor Chien Chung of the Tang dynasty in the year 781, is still in existence. It is a large slab of slate erected upon the back of a tortoise, and having a lengthy and thoroughly Oriental document cut upon the face. The burden of the inscription is praise of the Christian faith and of the several emperors of the then reigning dynasty. Embodied in it is a decree issued by the Emperor Tai Tsung in 639, which concludes as follows: "As it (the Nestorian belief) is right, let it be promulgated throughout the empire. Let the appropriate Board build a Judean church in the Righteous and Holy street of the capital, and appoint thereto twenty-one priests."

In 1269 A.D., the Venetian traveller and merchant, Marco Polo, was sent from Peking by the Emperor to Rome as an envoy to the Pope, requesting that missionaries might be sent to China to instruct the people in the true faith. Roman Catholic priests were sent in response to this request. Little is known of their numbers, work, or success beyond the fact that one of them, John de Monte Corvino by name, labored in the capital for eleven years, during which time he bap-

tized nearly 6000 persons. They appear to have made no permanent impression upon the Chinese.

The second period of Roman Catholic missions in China began in 1581 and ended in 1736. At first the work of the priests was opposed and forbidden by the authorities, and they were ordered to leave the country. But they won their way to official favor and patronage, and eventually some of their number occupied positions of authority and importance in the state. But quarrels among themselves, appeals to Rome and contradictory orders received therefrom, appeals to the Emperor and political intrigue worked their ruin. The end came with an effort to set the authority of the Pope above the decrees of the Emperor. The foreign priests were commanded to leave China, and more than a half million converts were required to abjure the Catholic faith.

Other sects have established themselves within the empire and grown and flourished there for centuries without molestation from either the people or the authorities. Taoism, imported from India long before the Christian era, still exists, and numbers its votaries by millions. And in the very centre of the Chinese Empire is to be found a single village of Jews, who made their way thither at the time of the dispersion of the tribes. Through all the centuries they have pre-



served their ancient customs and ritual, holding only business relations with their Chinese neighbors, and have been neither disturbed nor molested.

This rapid sketch of the many forms of religious belief imported into China since the very beginning of authentic history shows a traditional and consistent policy of toleration upon the part of the government. It has invited foreign faiths into the empire. It objects to political propagandism, but not to religious teaching.

When the reader recalls to mind the fact that, prior to the year of Our Lord 1868, no Englishman might vote or hold office in his native land, or enter as a student at either of the great universities of Oxford or Cambridge, unless he first subscribed his assent to the thirty-nine articles of the Episcopal Creed; that, to this day, Protestant missionaries are sternly prohibited from pursuing their calling in any part of the Russian Empire, and are hindered and hedged in by all sorts of obstructive regulations in every Roman Catholic country—with such facts in view, the fair-minded reader must at least admit that China has not been behind the age in the matter of religious toleration.

In the face of all criticism, friendly and hostile, and after making full and ample discount for in-

efficiency, unfitness, and indiscretion, each in individual cases, it still must be insisted that missionaries constitute the most important force working for progress, development, and conservation to be found in China. Their sincerity of purpose and devotion cannot be questioned by intelligent men. In spite of any and all assertions to the contrary, they are not, as a class, prone to attack any of the cherished institutions of the people. They prefer rather to teach and explain the beauties of the Christian faith and exhort to acceptance of it. They are not, upon the other hand, inclined to compromise with any form of heathenism, and can speak in plain but kindly language when the occasion appears to them to require such a course. True, they do not all possess the wisdom of the serpent added to the harmlessness of the dove. Yet, upon the whole, they exercise great tact, patience, and knowledge of human nature in their work among the Chinese. Probably no class of people waste so little time in tilting at windmills as the missionaries. They are far too busy, too much in earnest to indulge in any such waste. And their simple, quiet, devoted lives make an impression upon many who never hear a word of their teaching.

The strong assertion which heads the preceding paragraph would still hold good, if all di-

rectly religious teaching were left out of the estimate of their work. How can it be otherwise? The missionaries represent all that has ever been done for the education and elevation of the female half of the entire population of China. Practically the only schools for modern education have been established and conducted by them. The benefits of modern medical and surgical knowledge and practice reach the Chinese only through missionaries. Text-books and educational works of almost every class have been translated into the native tongue, and thus placed within reach of the people, almost exclusively by missionaries. They are not merely evangelists of the Christian faith. They are the exponents of new ideas, a broader range of knowledge, a higher type of manhood and womanhood, a veritable new birth and a new intellectual life. Strike out of the account every word of purely religious teaching uttered by him, and the missionary still stands as the chief beneficent worker of all that is best in the way of progress in China. The man who sneers at his quiet, unassuming life and untiring self-sacrificing labor only slanders his own intelligence and wastes his breath.

The greatest hindrance to this beneficent work probably lies in the popular suspicion, so often mentioned, that a political purpose forms the

original motive for the presence of the missionary in the empire. If the great powers of Europe gave the Chinese less occasion to dread their sinister designs upon the integrity and independence of China, it is probable that this hindrance would soon and quietly disappear. Pending that most desirable change in European policy, only time, tact, and patience can be relied upon to disabuse the minds of the ignorant and prove their suspicions groundless. The suggestion that missionaries should cast off all claims of nationality and place themselves at the mercy of the people whom they desire to serve, refusing to appeal to their own governments for protection, is as idle and valueless as the effort to conceal a foreign nationality by donning Chinese clothes. The Chinaman despises no man so much as the man without a country. He would not believe in any such absolute expatriation, and would probably decide that the simple-minded missionary was even a deeper trickster than others of his class. Or he would conclude that this homeless individual had left his country for his country's good, had either been banished or was in hiding because of some criminal offence. Nor is there occasion for any such drastic remedy. The missionary has his civil rights not less than any other class of foreigners in China. There is no occasion

for him to renounce them. In religion, as well as in politics or business, the plain, common-sense way is the best. It is only necessary for him to exercise prudence and moderation in the appeal to his own authorities, exhausting all means of friendly and unofficial adjustment before he formulates his grievance into a case. Especially should he be reluctant to seek redress on behalf of native Christians by way of foreign officials. Treaties provide for such reference, but advantage should never be taken of that fact, except in the most gross and inhuman cases of persecution. Patience, tact, and shrewd appeals to the good nature of local officials will work wonders in China as elsewhere. And the favorable word and influence of those in authority over the Chinese is being more and more freely given to the foreign missionary. In spite of all assertions to the contrary, he is making his way, becoming less the object of suspicion, and hence more widely influential, which no foreigner in China so well deserves as he.



## CHAPTER VII.

### DIPLOMACY IN CHINA.

**THERE** is evidence that, prior to the Christian era, a certain amount of commerce existed between China and the countries of Europe. It was, however, mainly indirect, the articles exchanged passing through the hands of the merchants in several intervening countries. Direct and permanent commercial intercourse probably began about A.D. 1300. The Christian era apparently marks the beginning of commercial and friendly missions between the Emperor of China and the heads of various Asiatic and European states. Thus, in A.D. 61 the Emperor sent an envoy to the West "for teachers and books of the true religion." He returned with Buddhist writings and priests. In A.D. 126 a Chinese general reached the valley of the Caspian Sea and carried the grape-vine back to China. In A.D. 166 the Roman Emperor, Marcus An-

toninus, sent an embassy by sea to China to procure the rich silks which that country produced. The culture of silk was introduced into Europe from China during the reign of the Roman Emperor Justinian. Tea plants were carried from India into China in A.D. 315. Ivory, apes, peacocks, silks, medicines, and gums were interchanged by the dangerous sea route, or the more dangerous land caravan route, during the earlier Christian centuries. It seems strange to read to-day that Chinese engineers were employed upon public works in Persia in A.D. 1275, and that Chinese physicians and astrologers healed the sick and foretold fate even before that date in Tabriz, the Persian capital.

Sporadic diplomatic missions from the nations of modern Europe began about A.D. 1500 and continued to the establishment of permanent relations. The French first appeared in China in A.D. 1506; the Portuguese followed them in A.D. 1516; the Spaniards in A.D. 1575; the Dutch in A.D. 1624; the Russians in A.D. 1689, and the British in A.D. 1793. With the exception of the Russian and British embassies, the conduct of all these messengers of amity, good-will, and commercial intercourse was such as befitted pirates rather than peaceably disposed men, and it went far to justify the Chinese Government

in its policy of rigid seclusion from all association with Europeans.

Direct and permanent diplomatic intercourse between China and Western nations dates back only to A.D. 1834. And conditions more unfortunate for the inception of good relations could not be conceived. As has been intimated, earlier French, Dutch, and Portuguese "peace" embassies had harried the southern coasts of China, killed men, women, and children, plundered towns and cities, and then sailed peacefully away. For many years a considerable traffic had been carried on at Canton between Chinese merchants at that place and the British East India Company. It was under official regulation. Six prominent Chinese, known as the "Hong Merchants," were given a monopoly of the trade, and were held accountable, under heavy bonds, for the proper conduct of it. The British East India Company had a resident agent at Canton who protected their interests. He held no official rank or title, was recognized by the Chinese authorities as merely a *taipan*, or managing clerk of a mercantile corporation, and when he had occasion to address the local officials he did so by means of a petition, and was "honored with their commands" in response. As pointed out in another chapter, this re-

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stricted commerce had been vexed; interfered with, and at intervals interrupted, during more than sixty years, by the persistent attempts of the East India Company and foreign merchants to carry on a contraband traffic in opium.

Such was the situation when, in 1834, the charter of that company expired, and the British Government took personal control of affairs in India. This involved the direct management of the trade at Canton, and made the British Crown the purveyor of the forbidden drug to the appetites of the Chinese. It held a monopoly of the production in India, and became, to all intents and purposes, the chief smuggler of it into China. The Right Honorable Lord Napier was appointed "Chief Superintendent of British Trade in China," two gentlemen were associated with him in the commission, and a long list of secretaries, interpreters, surgeons, and a chaplain made up his suite. When this formidable embassy arrived near Canton, the Chinese customs promptly reported to the provincial authorities that "three foreign devils" had landed. Thereupon word was sent to Lord Napier, through the "Hong Merchants," that he must remain where he was until permission was granted him to proceed to Canton.

The lengthy correspondence which followed

was insulting to the British Government, and exasperating to Lord Napier. All communications were sent to him through the "Hong Merchants;" he was not mentioned as an official of distinguished rank, but as "the barbarian eye." He was called upon to petition the governor, an officer lower than himself, for permission to enter upon the duties of his position. He was required to send his petition through the "Hong Merchants," and warned that if he "threw in" letters or petitions in any other way, they would not be read. An extract from a report made by the governor at Canton to the Emperor will best show the tone of the entire correspondence and the exquisite bombast of Chinese state papers of that period. "But considering that the said nation's king has hitherto been in the highest degree reverently obedient, he cannot in sending Lord Napier at this time have desired him thus obstinately to resist. The some hundreds of thousands of commercial duties, yearly coming from the said country, concern not the Celestial Empire to the extent of a hair or a feather's down. But the tea, the rhubarb, the raw silk of the Inner Land (China) are the sources by which the said nation's people live and maintain life. For the fault of one man, Lord Napier, must the livelihood of the whole

nation be precipitately cut off? . . . I hear that the said eye (Lord Napier) is a man of very solid and expansive mind and placid speech. If he consider, he can himself doubtless distinguish right and wrong. . . . Hereafter, when the said nation's king hears respecting these repeated orders (from the governor to Lord Napier) and official replies, he will know that the whole wrong lies on the barbarian eye, and that it is in nowise owing to any lack on the part of the Celestial Empire of extreme consideration for the virtue of reverential obedience exercised by the said nation's king."

It is necessary to explain that the Chinese authorities had no idea of the intention of Great Britain to send any officer of rank to transact business with them. They had been warned that the British East India Company would withdraw its agent, and that the government would take direct control of affairs. They had themselves thereupon suggested that the government should send out an agent to look after its interests. They never imagined that an official would be sent out for such a purpose. And, in the honesty of utter ignorance, they supposed the British Government to be simply another, and possibly larger, trading company. Hence they expected another *taipan*, or managing clerk. Thus, in one

of his orders, through the "Hong Merchants," to Lord Napier, the governor of Canton said: "The petty affairs of commerce are to be directed by the merchants themselves, the officers have nothing to hear upon the subject." At another point in the correspondence he sharply criticised Lord Napier for presumption, in making use of the same general phraseology in speaking of Great Britain, that he used in the mention of the Chinese Empire.

At this time the entire mass of the nation, from the Emperor at Peking to the meanest peasant, was in the most profound ignorance of the Western world. They knew no more of the great powers of America and Europe than we know to-day of any social or political divisions upon the planet Mars. Merchants were at the bottom of their social scale. And the rulers of China held in most profound contempt any and all men whose sole business in life was to make money.

For many centuries China had dominated a large part of Asia. She knew the petty states and less civilized tribes by which she was surrounded, and exercised kindly forbearance and moral power over them. She was at the head of an immense patriarchal system. She knew of what is now Asiatic Russia, for the rulers

of those regions had made prostration and paid tribute to the Emperor. She knew that immense hordes of pirates, banditti, and savages inhabited unknown countries bordering somewhere upon the ocean to the south and west, for the coast provinces had suffered from their depredations. But that great and independent nations, possessing highly organized systems of government and a civilization higher and more aggressive than hers could exist anywhere upon the face of the earth, was far beyond the wildest dreams of the Chinese. And they have not yet thoroughly learned that lesson or, rather, conceded that fact. So recently as 1864, the Chinese Government declined to negotiate a treaty with the kingdom of Prussia, because it had never heard of any such country. Upon the kindly interference of the British Minister at Peking, this decision was reversed, for the naïve reason that the Germans were a respectable people, whose king was distantly related to the queen of Great Britain.

Lord Napier was instructed, among his other duties, to discover the best means for opening the way to direct communication with the imperial government at Peking. His numerous successors were charged with the same duty. The envoys from the United States and from



France, who reached China, respectively, in 1844 and 1845, had similar instructions. The American Minister, Hon. Caleb Cushing, was made the bearer of a letter from the President to the Emperor of China, and was directed to proceed to Peking and deliver the letter in person. This letter is almost as great a curiosity in state papers as the Chinese correspondence from which quotations have been made. It is, in no sense, boastful or arrogant. It is, in substance, plain, frank, and business-like. It gives a bit of the geography of the United States, and is chiefly peculiar because it is couched throughout in those monosyllabic words and simple sentences which are suited to the capacity of very young children or unclad savages.

If foreign powers were bent upon establishing direct communication with Peking, the Chinese Government was more stubbornly determined against it, and no treaties were negotiated at the capital prior to 1860. With one exception, no foreign minister succeeded in reaching that centre of authority, and he failed to accomplish the object of his journey. From 1834 to 1860 all international business was transacted at sea-ports, more or less remote from Peking, and the legations were to be found established on board ships of war, either cruising about the

Yellow Sea, or lying at anchor in some harbor. While the Chinese did not seriously object to legitimate commerce localized at a few specified points and carefully regulated, they wished no official connection with foreign powers, and, least of all, were they prepared to admit them to any intercourse which carried with it the idea of equality. This would destroy the assumptions and the precedent of centuries. And a theory sustained by an antiquated precedent is of more value to the Chinese than any amount of commercial advantage. So, for twenty years foreign representatives pressed, and the imperial authorities fought, the right of diplomatic residence at Peking. The question was much complicated with other matters. And there is grave reason to suspect that, had Great Britain in these years secured the legalization of the opium traffic, an excuse would have been found for withdrawing the demand, much as, in the early months of 1873, an excuse was invented for instructing the British Minister at Peking to withdraw his demand for audience, that universally recognized right of all envoys at every civilized capital.

In 1858, a treaty was concluded at Tientsin between Lord Elgin, the British Commissioner, and the Chinese, and a promise given by the latter that ratifications should be exchanged

at Peking the year following. But when Sir Frederic Bruce, the new minister, attempted to proceed to the capital in accordance with this promise, the British fleet was fired upon from the forts at the mouth of the Peiho. A battle followed, which ended in the repulse of the British. In 1860, a combined force of English and French troops attacked and destroyed the Taku forts, captured Tientsin, marched to Peking, where in October of that year the treaty of 1858 was ratified, and the right of foreign representatives to reside at the capital, and to conduct international business with the Chinese Government upon terms of equality was formally acknowledged. And thus the natural channel of communication between China and the governments of America and Europe was finally and permanently opened.

It must not be assumed that this inevitable solution was willingly accepted by the Chinese, or that they modified, in any degree, their objections. They simply yielded to force, and submitted to what they regarded as a necessary evil. From their point of view, the whole business was an international impertinence. They had a natural and inalienable right to choose their associates, acquaintances, and friends, and when they had politely intimated to the "red-haired

men of the West" that such choice did not include them, the question should have been settled. No arguments and no train of reasoning could carry them from that position. It is an utter mistake to suppose that the benefits to be derived from commerce have any weight in the Chinese mind in favor of diplomatic intercourse. They never associate embassies with that sort of business.

The Chinese are natural and shrewd merchants, and the authorities are quite willing that they should traffic, but, they say, what has that to do with friendship? So long as they pay their taxes and do not deal in contraband wares "the petty affairs of commerce are to be directed by the merchants themselves, the officers have nothing to hear upon the subject." The writer has heard many long and labored arguments addressed by well-meaning foreigners to officials of all ranks in the Chinese Empire, upon the inestimable benefits to be derived from increased facilities for, and hence increased development of, the foreign trade. And they have all been wasted breath, as the bored and wearied faces of the listeners proved only too plainly. They cared nothing whatever for such benefits. And they wondered more and more why men of prominence, ability, and refinement should de-

vote their lives and wander all over the face of the earth in pursuit of money. That governments should concentrate all their energies upon such a purpose, spending millions of lives and money upon it, was quite beyond their comprehension, and tended in nowise to increase their respect. The remark, already quoted, of the governor of Canton to the Emperor, correctly expresses what was the opinion of the government of China at that time. And that opinion has remained unchanged to the present day. "The some hundreds of thousands of commercial duties yearly coming from the said country concern not the Celestial Empire the extent of a hair or a feather's down."

The forced concession of the right of diplomatic residence at the Chinese Court, and of the conduct of all international business upon a basis of equality, struck a deadly blow at one of the assumptions and precedents dearest to the nation. It practically denied the universal supremacy of the Emperor. In their system of paternalism as a form of government, he is the sole son of Heaven on earth, and hence the natural and supreme ruler of all men. None, however exalted, may approach his presence except upon hands and knees, none address him except in faltering and timid response to a ques-

tion. No possible objection could be raised to his being seen by foreigners. They had worshipped in his presence from time immemorial, and he had gazed benignantly upon them. But if the representatives of other rulers were to walk unconcerned into his presence, stand before him, and address him as man to man, then the idea dearest to the Chinese mind would be destroyed, and the entire fabric of human government would totter and fall. All this was strikingly illustrated in the discussions upon the audience question in 1873. The right of the foreign representatives to audience with the young Emperor was promptly conceded. The question of ceremonial—that is, the question whether they should or should not present themselves before him upon their hands and knees—developed a heated controversy which continued for months. The point was only yielded when the Chinese authorities were informed by the United States Minister that audience under such a degrading condition would not be accepted, and that, unless it were promptly conceded under the forms usually followed at Western courts, all relations between his government and China would be broken off.

The establishment of legations at Peking threw a multitude of new, intricate, and perplex-

ing questions upon the Imperial Government. There were practically no precedents which might serve as guides. No one at the capital knew anything about foreigners and foreign relations. In the immense official class permanently established on duty there, probably there were less than a score who had ever looked in the face of a native of America or Europe. Nothing was known about international law. There were no text-books upon the subject, for China had had no international relations, and the very term, at least in its Western meaning, did not exist in the language. Naturally, there was no board or department of the government to which the conduct of diplomatic business could be entrusted. An enormous mass of affairs, involving the most important, critical, and delicate relations, were suddenly thrown upon the Peking authorities, and they were unversed with and unprepared to handle them.

Under these unpromising conditions a new office was created and called the Tsung li Yamen, or Superintendency of Foreign Affairs. Prince Kung, a brother of the Emperor, was placed at its head, and a number of the influential members of the government were associated with him. Each of these gentlemen had other official duties, held by him to be of more importance

and more desirable. Thus constituted, this body has continued to manage the diplomatic affairs of China down to the present time. It is a cumbersome, unwieldy, and unsatisfactory arrangement. Appointment to it is not sought by powerful officials, and to be gazetted to the Tsung li Yamen is regarded as almost akin to censure. It has also happened more than once that an official who had made himself conspicuous by the utterance of extreme anti-foreign sentiments was ordered by the Emperor to a seat upon this board. This was done, not in order to pack the office with members who were hostile to foreigners, but to give such gentlemen a practical lesson in the difficulties which attended the management of international questions.

The result, however, was none the less very unfortunate. Men who had never in their lives looked upon a map of the world, did not know the names of the leading powers of the earth, and could not tell whether France was situated in the north of England or in Cuba, entered the Foreign Office from time to time with the stern and lofty determination to manage the foreigner. The result was generally a salutary lesson to the Chinese official, but, in the meantime, business was seriously obstructed. In this way all the varying shades of political opinion were repre-



sented in the body. As no despatch or other communication could be made to any foreign minister until it had been approved and initialed by each of the eight or ten members of the Foreign Office, it must be evident that the danger of any unseemly haste in the conduct of affairs was avoided.

And yet the Tsung li Yamen has not deserved all the criticism, abuse, and ridicule which has been heaped upon it. It is difficult to see what other or more satisfactory scheme for the conduct of foreign affairs could have been adopted. The practice of making one individual the responsible head of a great department of state has never been followed in China. Had it been adopted in this case, there was probably no man in the empire sufficiently bold to undertake the duties of the office. If one had been found, he could not have retained his position for a single week. For whoever occupied that post stood constantly between two terrible fires. Questions of which he knew little or nothing must be studied and satisfactorily adjusted. He must meet the demands, sometimes unjust, and often pressed peremptorily, of the foreign ministers. If he yielded, then he must face the displeasure of the Emperor. If he resisted, and trouble came in consequence, then again he was liable to

severe censure from his own master. For, from the Chinese standpoint, it was his duty to resist foreign demands, and at the same time ward off any untoward results of his resistance. He must manage the foreigner by finesse, adroitness, and diplomacy, keeping him in good-nature, and at the same time yielding little or nothing to his demands. The position has only to be stated to demonstrate its impossibilities for any one person, however great his influence. Only by a division of responsibility among a number of the more influential of the high officials of the Imperial Government could foreign affairs be safely managed. Censure and criticism when so considerably divided were still dangerous. And they came from both sides. If the ministers of the Foreign Office have been characterized by foreigners as evasive, dilatory, obstructive, and impracticable, they have been denounced by their own people in far more extreme and threatening terms. Not an official has been connected with the Tsung li Yamen who escaped without some loss of influence and prestige. Even Prince Kung, son of one emperor, brother of another, and uncle of two succeeding, and at one time regent of the empire, was commonly spoken of as "Kuei tz liu," or "Devil Number Six," because he was at the head of the Foreign Office,

and hence was connected with the "foreign devils." "Number Six" was added to the unsavory epithet because he was the sixth son of his father. Any person who was in position to watch the members of the Tsung li Yamen during the prolonged discussion of the question of audience in 1873 could not fail to see the terrible strain under which they were placed. As one of them remarked subsequently, they were in hourly danger of the loss of official position and of life.

There have been many able, broad-minded, patriotic men in the Chinese Foreign Office. Few statesmen in Western lands would have undertaken the duties which they assumed under command, and fewer could have managed them with even a moderate measure of success in the face of such obstacles. And fewer yet would have consented to remain in office under the treatment which they were at times called upon to endure. The inevitable difficulties of the position were sufficiently great to appall most men. Some of the peculiar traits of Chinese character enabled them to surmount these. They were forced to yield more than once to gross injustice, unreasonable demands, and acts of positive aggression, and then to pacify the wrath of the Emperor and the nation for having

so yielded. Preposterous demands, which would never have been whispered by an envoy at any Western court, were formally presented to them and forced, under threats, to a favorable settlement. International law was interpreted in so many different and contradictory ways to them that their brains fairly reeled under the strain. They endured all this with courtesy and polite demeanor.

For, whatever other faults a Chinese gentleman may have, he is always smiling and courteous, at times exasperatingly so. But in addition to all these trials, they were at times called upon to submit, at the hands of foreign representatives, to violent and overbearing conduct, contemptuous demeanor, and various angry demonstrations, such as screaming, voluble profanity, pounding the table, and a clenched fist thrust into their faces. This statement may seem impossible to believe, but it is literally true. And it is scarcely less incredible that venerable, white-headed gentlemen, members of the Imperial Chinese Cabinet, should have patiently submitted to such outrages upon decency for years, before they ventured to enter a protest with the prime minister of the government which one conspicuous offender represented.

It is far from pleasant to place such criticisms of any foreign representatives at Peking upon record. But when the air is full of unfriendly criticisms of all things Chinese, and every traveling book-maker must have his or her fling at the Chinese Foreign Office, a sense of common justice requires that at least a portion of the truth upon the other side of the question should be laid before the public. It has been essentially difficult to transact international business at Peking. It has been at times a severe trial to the nerves and the patience. But it has been made plain that the native officials had at least their full share of these difficulties which they were forced to endure. They were generally accessible upon the side of their good-nature. And the writer found in a somewhat extended official relation with them that unwearied patience, unvaried good-nature, and a most objectionable persistency were generally sufficient to secure him all the success which he had the right to expect.

Whatever of truth there may be in the lines

"For ways that are dark and tricks that are vain,  
The heathen Chinese is peculiar,"

it is certain that he has not a monopoly of these qualities. And this fact was learned by the

imperial authorities at the outset of diplomatic intercourse at Peking. Incidental reference is made in another chapter to a fraudulent clause, inserted in the French treaty of Tientsin, by a Roman Catholic missionary who acted as interpreter, the object of which was to secure the right of residence in the interior to members of his calling. In all the earlier treaties with China, the foreign text was made the authoritative version in any dispute as to meaning. The fraudulent clause was not inserted in the French text, but in the Chinese. The author of the forgery was probably in doubt what action the French Minister might take if he discovered the addition, which he could not do if it was placed only in the Chinese text. And he counted upon the frightened and cowed condition of the Chinese authorities as the result of recent defeat in battle to prevent them from raising any question about it. The trickery was unnecessary and harmless of results, as the French Minister promptly notified the Tsung li Yamen that no advantage would be taken of the interpolated clause. A similar fraud, earlier in date, but brought to light at about the same time, was productive of much embarrassment to the Chinese Government, and had more serious results.

In the days when Portugal occupied a notice-

able place upon the map of the world, a peace mission from that country made a piratical descent upon the coast of China, near the mouth of the river below Canton, and established a fortified settlement upon the peninsula of Macao. After repeated conflicts between Chinese troops and the intruders, a barrier wall was erected to confine them to a narrow area, and ultimately a treaty was made by the terms of which they were permitted to remain there upon payment of an annual ground rent to the Chinese Government, the latter retaining sovereignty over the territory. This treaty was written in French, Portuguese, and Chinese, the first-named text being the authoritative version. A Roman Catholic missionary was the interpreter, and to him fell the duty of drafting the several texts and of certifying to their identity in substance, which he did.

Many years passed before the government of Portugal proposed an exchange of the ratifications of this treaty. In the meantime the infamous coolie traffic had become established at Macao. Chinese laborers were kidnapped from the mainland, imprisoned in barracoons at Macao, and sent thence by shiploads to labor in the sugar plantations and mines of Cuba and Peru. The Portuguese Government derived

large revenues from this form of slavery, and the Chinese authorities protested in vain against it. Eventually the exchange of ratifications of the treaty was sought by Portugal. In the meantime, however, the attention of the authorities at Peking had been called to a serious and manifestly intentional discrepancy between the Chinese and foreign texts. In the former, the sovereignty of China over Macao was plainly recognized, and the government was pledged to appoint proper officers to govern its people and maintain order there. In the foreign texts, China as plainly relinquished all sovereignty over the peninsula, and was to be permitted by Portugal to appoint a consular officer to reside there. The exchange of ratifications was refused for many years until, wearied by the hopeless effort to have wrong made right save at the cost of war, the exchange was made and Macao was ceded to Portugal. Other instances, not perhaps of fraud in the construction of treaties, but of breach of faith on the part of foreign powers in carrying into effect their provisions, might be given.

It must not be imagined that the Chinese Government has been above criticism in its line of conduct under these international compacts. Upon the contrary, there have been constant



and grave causes of complaint. It is not in the Chinese disposition to openly repudiate an obligation, and hence this has not been done. But plain provisions have been wilfully misinterpreted, and, what is even more vexatious, when pledges contained in the treaties have been nominally carried into effect, their value has been destroyed by indirect and underhanded methods. On occasion such action has been justified by the plea that all treaties concluded prior to 1861 were extorted from the Chinese at the point of the bayonet, and hence, being contracts made under duress, were not binding. If this argument were admitted, a large number of treaties and conventions, now held as of full effect between civilized nations, would be void and without force.

The main burden of diplomatic discussion at Peking is confined to questions affecting commerce. Here, again, the Chinese excuse themselves for pursuing a recalcitrant line of conduct upon the ground, not often formally stated, that all questions of duties and other taxes upon commerce ought of right to be decided by each nation for itself; that they concern the inherent rights of sovereignty; that control of these questions has been wrongfully wrested from China, to the extent that she can neither fix the rate

of impost nor enact necessary commercial regulations without the consent of all the treaty powers; and that hence they are justified in insisting upon the narrowest and most strict interpretation of provisions forced upon them in violation of their natural rights. All of which may be logical and conclusive. At the same time, there can be no doubt that the interference of foreign powers with these natural rights of China, to the extent of incorporating a tariff of duties and commercial regulations in the treaties, was necessary if any considerable international traffic were to continue in existence. Failing such interference, and such treaty stipulations, it would have been speedily strangled by excessive taxation and obstructive legislation.

The Chinese Government has shown a disposition to trifle with the serious character of treaties upon two notable occasions. In 1879, Chung Hou, a minister of the Tsung li Yamen, was sent to St. Petersburg to conclude a treaty of delimitation of certain portions of the western boundary of the empire. His negotiations with Russia extended through several months, during all of which time he was in almost daily communication with the authorities at Peking. Each article of the treaty, as agreed upon, was submitted to and approved by the imperial authori-

ties, and when his labors were concluded, he asked and received permission to sign the document. Having done so, he at once set out upon his return to Peking. But during the interval occupied by this journey, a hostile political influence came into control at the Chinese capital, and when Chung Hou reached Shanghai, he was met with an order from the Emperor that his property be confiscated, he be stripped of his offices, and beheaded, upon the ground that he had "exceeded his authority and violated his instructions." A prompt and energetic remonstrance from the entire diplomatic body at Peking, coupled with the assurance that, if China treated her representatives abroad in such manner, no civilized government would consent to receive them, and more emphatic warnings from Russia, saved the unfortunate envoy's life and property. But he spent the remainder of his days in vain entreaties to gods and men for restoration to the favor of the Chinese Emperor. About a year later, the Foreign Office spent many weeks in negotiating a treaty with the Japanese Minister at Peking, and at the last moment, for no assignable reason, refused to sign the document.

In a manner certainly not less trifling and inconsistent, the French Government in 1882

formally thanked its minister at Peking for negotiating a treaty with China, settling certain matters in Tonquin; only a few months later repudiated the treaty, and censured and dismissed from his post the minister because he had signed it; demanded an indemnity from China for the expenses of one of the numerous French land-stealing expeditions; refused arbitration, and opened war upon the Chinese because payment was refused. Great Britain accepted such provisions of the Chefoo Convention of 1877 as made to her advantage, and repudiated the remainder. It should be no great matter of surprise if, under such circumstances, China finds this modern business of foreign relations and friendly intercourse (so called) a most unsatisfactory mess of perplexities and vexations, a continued dicker in which she is generally the loser, and longs for the good old days when the men of the West remained in the West and left her to herself.

Diplomacy in China is at once tiresome and exciting. It necessitates familiarity with a great range and variety of subjects, many of which are never heard of elsewhere. The representative at Peking is forced to be an educator in a double sense. He must inform the Chinese of Western matters with which they are unfamiliar. And he

is constantly obliged to explain to his own government Oriental peculiarities, customs, and laws, which of necessity influence his own action, since, without such explanation, his conduct of public affairs would appear peculiar and at times deserving of censure. Who, outside of China, or within the empire, for that matter, has any valuable understanding of her financial system or her laws of taxation? Who has reached an exhaustive knowledge of the relations between the provincial governments and the central authority? Who can explain her system of courts and judicial procedure, or can show how and why it is that a censor is not merely permitted, but is in duty bound, on occasion, to criticise the Emperor, that Son of Heaven and its sole representative upon earth? Yet all these matters are constantly cropping up to vex and complicate the labors of a diplomatic representative at Peking. He must know something about them to be at all fit for his position. And he must know a good deal about them, in order to so conduct his business as to reduce the inevitable friction between Eastern and Western ideas and policies to a minimum.

Unfortunately, it has been far too much the habit of diplomatists at Peking to ignore and ride roughshod over any protests and objections

of the Chinese which were based upon conditions which they did not understand. Manifestly, the Chinese Government must carry out in their entirety its treaty obligations, and local ideas and laws must give way at any points of conflict. But there are wise and unwise ways by which to accomplish this result. And he who pushes roughly ahead, setting his heavy foot upon the most sensitive and sacred ideas, traditions, and prejudices of the Chinese, may be a most energetic man of business, but assuredly is not a good diplomat. One success, won by such processes, is more harmful to the government which he represents than many defeats.

Chinese of all classes are proud and sensitive to an extreme degree. If one of them, to use their own expressive idiom, has "lost his face"—that is, has been humiliated or put to shame—nothing can be accomplished with him thereafter. Arguments, persuasions, even apologies, are all wasted. He may be overpowered by force, but he can never be won. And it is simply astonishing that so little regard has been paid to the common weaknesses and peculiarities of human nature in dealing with the Chinese, especially by diplomats, whose business it is, by quiet and persuasive means, to win victories for their own governments, and, at the same time, to keep the

vanquished good-natured and satisfied. The lectures delivered by official representatives of foreign powers to Chinese statesmen, upon the ignorance and stupidity of the latter and the corruption and general worthlessness of their government, would fill many volumes. And a recital of the personal impertinences, slights, and examples of bad taste would fill many more. The United States once removed one of its ministers abroad from office because he had publicly accused an officer of the government to which he was accredited with having accepted a bribe. When our representative, in defence of his conduct, offered to prove the truth of this accusation, the Secretary of State quietly remarked: "But it is no part of your duty to assert or prove that any member of the government of —— is venal or corrupt." Yet something closely akin to the breach of propriety for which our minister was removed is of frequent occurrence in China, and no notice of it is taken by the superiors of those who thus offend.

None of the high officials at Peking or elsewhere in the empire are familiar with any other language than their own. Nor is the Chinese Foreign Office provided with a staff of competent interpreters. The treaties require that all business should be transacted in Chinese. Each

legation is, therefore, required to have its own linguists, and, as a rule, no communication is possible between the head of any diplomatic establishment and the imperial authorities except through a third person. The writer was once party to a conversation in which five different languages were necessarily used to enable two distinguished gentlemen to exchange ideas. Interpreters are not always competent, or even moderately well fitted for their important duties, and confusion, embarrassment, and serious misunderstandings are sometimes the result. Foreign representatives have been known to take an unfair advantage of these peculiar conditions, and thus to further complicate a difficult situation.

At a time when affairs between France and China were in a critical state, and an acrid correspondence was in progress between the French Minister at Peking and the Foreign Office, a serious error in translation was made by the interpreter of the former. When the attention of the minister was called to this error in a most courteous manner by the Chinese officials, he retorted that, as fault was found with his interpreter, he would send them no more despatches or correspondence in Chinese, but confine himself to the use of his own language.



And this he proceeded to do. In almost any other court in the world, this irascible and unreasonable gentleman would have been quietly left to cool himself, and to seek his senses at his leisure, and, in the meantime, all correspondence would have ceased. Or, and what is more probable, his passports would have been sent to him. But the Chinese ministers were far too anxious and timid to adopt this appropriate remedy. The situation was embarrassing and vexatious in the highest degree. They were in daily receipt of despatches from the angry Frenchman, couched, doubtless, in most elegant Parisian, not one word of which could they read. There was not in the capital a single Chinese whose knowledge of French could be relied upon, at least in a correspondence of such importance. Under these circumstances, they appealed for aid to an official of another legation, who readily came to their assistance, and who for months, unsuspected by the French Minister, was the intermediary in all correspondence between him and the Chinese Foreign Office.

It ought to be said in passing that, during this same crisis in the relations between China and France, a number of French vessels of war dropped quietly, one by one, into the harbor of Foo Chow, as is the custom and right of such

craft to visit the ports of friendly powers the world over. They lay there quietly among vessels of other nationalities for several weeks, their officers exchanging visits with the local authorities, as is also the custom. Suddenly, one August afternoon, they opened fire upon an extensive Chinese arsenal established there, and upon some Chinese gunboats lying in the harbor, and continued the bombardment until arsenal and ships were destroyed, involving the loss of many lives and property of great value. No sufficient notice was given. The Chinese gunboats had not even time to get up their anchors, after being warned, before they were in a whirlwind of French shot and shell. War had not been declared. No state of war existed. At the very day and hour when this havoc was being wrought at Foo Chow, diplomatic negotiations were being quietly conducted at Peking, the French Minister and his suite were living there in peace and safety, and the Chinese authorities were eagerly seeking a reasonable adjustment of affairs, offering mediation, arbitration, anything short of abject submission to the outrageous demands and plundering proclivities of the French.

In view of such and many similar incidents of greater or less importance, it cannot be a matter

of surprise to any thoughtful person, that what we term international law is a great and hopeless puzzle to the Chinese statesman. He hears it constantly quoted as of universal acceptance and final authority. Yet, what with his ignorance of its provisions, and the manner in which it is misquoted, misapplied, and distorted out of all recognizable shape to suit personal ends, his desire for any further knowledge of it has vanished with his respect. In his over-anxiety to be courteous, he puts himself sometimes in the wrong. If he fails to give notice of some unimportant event—such, for example, as the closing for a few hours of certain streets in Peking—his attention is called to this interference with the privileges of foreign citizens or subjects. If, upon the other hand, he gives a polite notice, he is requested not to trouble the foreign representatives with petty municipal affairs, which do not interest or concern them. If he is ever brave enough to quote a canon of international law in defence of his own position in any matter, he is informed that it does not apply. If he objects to a quotation made against him, he is advised, in words of polite and condescending patronage, that he knows nothing whatever upon the subject. He hears a great deal about “national honor,” connected generally with some indem-

nity demanded of him. Yet, so far as he can discover, small respect is paid either to the honor or integrity of the Chinese Empire. He keeps his hands scrupulously out of all national or international affairs which do not, from his point of view, concern his own country. Yet he is beset with advice, warnings, and threats about his management of business which is strictly and solely Chinese. And to him diplomacy is very much of a hornet's nest, in which there are innumerable stings, but no honey.

Much of all this was unavoidable. Foreign governments, having forced themselves into relations with China against the will of the latter, have sought to tutor and bring her into line with the rest of the civilized world. Had their motives been purely unselfish, had their representatives at Peking been missionaries of modern politics, sociology, and civilization, instead of agents to further the ends of greed for gain and political domination, as too many of them have been, the difficulties of the situation would still have been enormous. Nor is it to be understood that all diplomats at Peking have been objectionable to the Chinese, or have given them cause of complaint. Many have been true friends, and have been recognized and trusted as such. They, while maintaining the honor

and dignity of their own governments and fully protecting every interest committed to their care, have still had room for sympathy, patience, and tact in all their business relations. They have realized that a foreign representative might be a devoted friend to the Chinese, and still perform his official duties. And, as might be expected, these men, while doing much for China, have been by far the most valuable and successful servants to their own governments.

The personal equation counts for more in Chinese diplomacy than elsewhere. And nowhere else is there to be found such a fascinating study of men, as well as of international questions. The Chinese merchant studies his customer before he names a price for his wares. The Chinese statesman thinks that he knows how to play upon all the various chords which influence human action. Yet, in many respects he possesses the simplicity of a child, and there is a never-failing interest in studying him, and watching the effect of different influences brought to bear upon him. With all his secretiveness and reserve, there is a large amount of transparency about him to the experienced student. The merits of a given question often weigh far less with him than the shape and manner of its presentation and the personality

of him who has it in charge. Argue through all the range of mutual and international advantage, treaty right, commercial benefits, or duty, dignity, and honor, and no effect is produced. Then drop all argument, and seek the same result as a personal favor, and it is at once and graciously conceded.

Diplomacy might almost be defined as the science and art of managing men. And what has made it to a large extent a failure in China, a source of irritation, and a cause of difficulties, instead of a peaceable means of remedy, has been a lack of this careful study of men as well as of measures.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CHINESE OPINION OF FOREIGNERS.

A MAN's home is to him the centre of the universe. His country is the best in the world, the state or province in which he lives is the most desirable part of his country, the city, village, or country cross-roads where his home is found is the finest and most enviable in the State, and even though he lives miles from any neighbor, still all things desirable revolve around him, and those who have the misfortune to reside elsewhere must be lonely and out of the world. He may grumble and complain, suffer hardship, poverty, and distresses of every sort, yet let any other man, either in criticism or sympathy, speak disparagingly of that little circle of earth which centres about him, and his whole soul is up in arms at once. When absent from home, he is never weary of describing its virtues. He exaggerates some of its desirable qualities, and invents others which it never possessed. Nothing is

good enough for him elsewhere, because nothing looks, sounds, tastes, smells, or feels like home.

This is a universal and beneficent trait of human nature. Beneficent because it is the tap-root from which spring many noble virtues. Public spirit, civic pride, patriotism, and a host of other manly qualities, are all the outgrowths of this stock. But it may also develop into provincialism, narrowness of mind, and smallness of soul. He who allows his mental horizon to be bounded by a hundred-acre farm and the village store and post-office is neither a good patriot, a desirable citizen, nor a full-sized man. It is, perhaps, the most difficult of change of all human characteristics. To transfer the allegiance of a man from one country to another is, to say the least, quite as venturesome an experiment as to transplant a full-grown tree. Those who have watched with attentive eyes the very slow processes of assimilation, by which natives of foreign lands have been transformed into citizens of the United States, cannot have failed to realize this fact. Frequently the original stock takes on no change whatever, and two or three generations must pass before the transfer of nationality is completed.

Few men are sufficiently broad-minded or philosophic to thoroughly recognize the fact that



this feeling or sentiment of attachment to locality is universal, is inherent in all peoples and races of men. Every man everywhere has it, and each wonders, more or less mildly, why any other man should feel as he does. The Englishman boasts that Great Britain is the leading Christian nation upon the face of the earth, and thinks the Frenchman a fool because he refuses his assent to the assertion. The Russian looks upon both with scorn for their absurd and ignorant notions. The citizen of the United States knows better than any of them. And the Chinaman regards all men of the West as barbarians who have never tasted the bliss of a true home in the Celestial Empire. Part of this general feeling is pure patriotism, but a large and less worthy ingredient is conceit. The place where each man lives is the best place, his associations and surroundings are the best, what he does, owns, or controls are the best, all because they are parts of him.

From this as a starting point, it is only necessary to analyze the general Western opinion of the Chinese, to discover the original Chinese opinion of foreigners. As imitation is the most subtle form of flattery, so differences may be reckoned as discredits on either side, and those will be accounted the worst traits in each in which they least resemble the other. The ignorance of

each regarding the real qualities possessed by the other will serve to accentuate adverse judgment at every point. Little of opinion thus founded is logical or governed by good sense. But when was popular judgment based upon either reason or knowledge? Much of it is whimsical. Much of it, again, is determined by the habits, customs, and taste—or what passes for taste—of those who entertain it. Much of it is predicated upon conditions which do not exist, and much from a careless and conceited disposition to condemn whatever is not easily understood.

To illustrate some of these peculiar qualities of popular judgment. We regard the Chinese with contempt because they will not fight, they abhor us because we do. Neither opinion is justified by the facts. We are a peace-loving people, and their history abundantly proves that the Chinese will fight when the occasion appears to them to demand such action. Objection has been made in public meetings to the presence of Chinese in this land "because they work all the time." They are naturally industrious and frugal, yet as fond of ease and pleasure as any race of men. Shivers of horror have run over the Western world at the universal practice of female infanticide among the Chinese. But no such practice exists to any noticeable extent. We ridicule

their manner of dress, they regard ours as indecent. We do not approve of flat noses and slant eyes. They consider our noses, eyes, and hair as deformities. We abhor the cramped foot of a Chinese woman, and are fully justified in the feeling. But why should the unnatural waist-lines of a foreign lady of fashion be less objectionable to them? They have not been educated to regard the wasp an ideal of beauty. If we dislike to see a female upon the streets wearing baggy trousers, why should they approve a lady having bare arms and exposed bosom and back at a public gathering of both sexes? Which, after all, is more offensive to true taste and genuine refinement? And which is the more calculated to excite immorality? We live, possibly too much, in the present and future, they far too exclusively in the past. But their dignity and repose of manner are not wholly bad, nor are our eager rush and rapid transit, from one source of excitement to another, wholly good. It is easy to deliver epigrammatic flings at the Chinese. But epigrams are seldom just, and hence are dangerous as the basis of any judgment. A quieter but more accurate mutual knowledge is much to be desired.

As far back as Chinese opinion of foreigners can be traced, it is founded upon the narrow

grounds of national egotism and vanity, intermingled with another element to be mentioned later. When the first specimens of the men of the West reached her shores, China was the isolated centre of a world which she knew and ruled. She was, in every regard, the superior of all races and tribes of men about her. They deferred to her authority, accepted her moral and intellectual superiority, and shaped themselves and their institutions upon the model which she furnished. They borrowed her language, literature, knowledge, and civilization, and in these and a variety of other ways, worshipped at the shrine of her overweening conceit and pride.

The Chinese had heard of various tribes existing in the far West, and there is reason to believe that similar rumors of races of men upon the American continent had reached them. These were all described as creatures of a very low order of humanity, ill-shaped and grotesque in appearance, hiding in dens and caves of the earth, feeding upon roots and herbs, and lacking nearly every mark which discriminates a man from a beast. Pictures of them were drawn and circulated throughout the empire, hideous and repulsive to a point beyond description. When later years brought examples of these human monstrosities to China, and imagination was corrected

by sight, their forms and faces still remained ugly, their dress uncouth, their language a hopeless jargon, and their manners rude and offensive. Their mental qualities took on much of the ill-favor which had been removed from their physical appearance by personal contact and acquaintance.

The Chinese of those days are represented by a Roman writer "as singularly frugal, quiet, and tranquil, unwarlike and averse to the use of arms." Those who came among them were greedy for gain, indifferent to the means by which it was secured, preferring plunder and open violence to a slow and unexciting traffic. When, still later, they came in considerable numbers and of different nationalities, they quarrelled, fought, and murdered among themselves, or made the Chinese the objects of joint robbery. There was nothing in their conduct to indicate any of that civilization, or regard for the rights of others, which had been universal in China for centuries. It is impossible to determine which the natives of the empire detested the more, the appearance of these intruders or their conduct. A Chinese writer describes one body of Europeans who reached Canton about A.D. 1506, as follows: "At about this time also, the Hollanders, who in ancient times inhabited a wild territory, and had no

intercourse with China, came to Macao in two or three large ships. Their clothes and their hair were red; their bodies tall; they had blue eyes, sunk deep in their heads. Their feet were one cubit and two-tenths long; and they frightened the people by their strange appearance."

It, of course, was not to be expected that these early wanderers to China, who, in the main, were pirates and freebooters, should exhibit any of the higher traits or amenities of civilization. It may have been unjust upon the part of the Chinese to accept them as representative types of the nations to which they belonged, and to condemn all Europeans for the acts of a comparatively few unprincipled men. But that is the common course throughout the world—to judge the many by the few. And before Americans censure the Chinese in such a matter, it would be wise for them to consider what is their own practice in a similar direction. For example, the American opinion of the hundreds of millions of the Chinese is determined by the appearance and conduct of the small number of the race who are found in this country as laborers. Yet they belong to the lowest class in the empire, and come exclusively from a narrow area near Canton. They furnish no fair example of the Chinese race. The average American regards China as a nation of laun-

drymen. But it is doubtful whether there is a single public laundry in the empire supported by natives. The Chinese do not wash their linen at too frequent intervals, and this sanitary operation is always performed in the privacy of home.

The government and people of China rested their opinion of all Europeans upon the conduct of these first specimens of the men of the West which they had seen, and that opinion has remained, unchanged in substance, to the present day. It is not strange that they bestowed the title of barbarians upon them, nor that, when they dared, they treated them in a manner befitting the title. The Chinese opinion and rule of conduct toward foreigners is summed up in an order which has been thus translated by Premaire: "The barbarians are beasts, and not to be ruled on the same principles as subjects of China. Were any one to attempt to control them by the great maxims of reason, it would lead to nothing but confusion. The ancient kings well understood this, and accordingly ruled barbarians by misrule; therefore to rule barbarians by misrule is the best and true way to govern them." It is a curious fact that substantially the same rule of treatment of foreigners was current in England, and throughout the continent of Europe, at about the same time.

The cowardly and obsequious demeanor of other foreigners, as absurd and degrading as that of the freebooters was brutal and inhuman, tended still further to confirm the Chinese in their opinion that the Western foreigner was a beast and deserved only beastly treatment. Their only anxiety was for trade, or, from the Chinese standpoint, the chance of making money. Granted this, they were ready to submit to any ceremonies, however degrading; to accomplish it, they were willing to sacrifice personal or national honor, dignity, and self-respect. The Dutch were peculiarly conspicuous in this direction. After earlier missions sent to Peking to further trade, missions the heads of which had prostrated themselves upon their hands and knees before the Emperor, before his vacant chair, and before any official, high or low, who cared to exact this mark of submission from them, the climax of degradation was reached in A.D. 1795. It was then decided by the Dutch Government to send a special embassy to Peking to congratulate the Emperor, Chien Lung, upon reaching the sixtieth year of his reign, and, of course, to obtain better facilities for trade. The members of this embassy made the long overland journey to the Chinese capital in midwinter, subjected everywhere *en route* to treatment as criminals. They were, while in Pe-



king, the mountebanks of the court, which amused itself at their expense, requiring them to perform "the nine prostrations" before every person and everything as the whim seized them. The Dutch Minister and the members of his suite were required to exhibit their agility upon skates, for the pleasure of the Emperor and members of the Imperial Family. As a special mark of favor, they were presented with a mess of broken victuals, which not only came from the Emperor's table, but bore the marks of his teeth. This repast was sent to them upon a dirty plate, and, as a member of the embassy says, "appeared rather destined to feed a dog than to serve as food for a human being." They were never permitted to speak a word about business, and accomplished nothing whatever beyond confirming the Chinese idea of the beastly nature of foreigners.

It is a conspicuous fact that, at the first contact of the European races with the aborigines of the American continent and the islands of the Pacific Ocean, the latter ascribed supernatural power to their visitors, and, in some instances, sought to worship them as gods. Though the Chinese do not form the aboriginal race of that portion of the Asiatic continent occupied by them, they have always manifested a similar feeling, though perhaps in a less degree, toward

Western foreigners. It is unnecessary to inquire into the cause of this peculiar notion. It exists and has exercised a marked effect upon their opinions and conduct. Intensely superstitious themselves, they have credited the American and European with the possession of powers over, or allied to, the mysterious influences which surround them, as they believe, upon every side, and which they fear and hate. It is not to be expected that such vague suspicions and ridiculous ideas should have been reduced to any exact statement or definite belief. They have only materialized to a point where they can be recognized as invariably hostile to the Chinese. Indeed, the Chinese demonology appears to include no friendly spirits or influences. None are supposed to act beneficently. All are to be placated, appeased, or thwarted, none are to be sought after or desired. Hence, if the Western foreigner was a beast, he was an uncanny beast; if he was a barbarian, his energies and powers extended beyond ordinary human limits, and always in a direction harmful to others. He was past-master in all the evil forces of the black art, magic, hypnotism, and diablery of every kind.

A singular proof of the extent to which this uncomplimentary notion of foreign energy and power has gained credence in China is found in

one of the pretensions of the leaders of the so-called Boxer movement. They claimed to have stolen the foreigners' secret, and to confer upon such as joined their organization supernatural influences superior to those which the men of the West possess, and which should render the possessor invulnerable to sword thrust or bullet. They thus proposed, by the use of the foreigners' own imaginary weapons, to destroy them or drive them out of China. Public exhibitions of the protection afforded by these magic arts were given, and, by means of some claptrap which must have been known to the leaders, were apparently successful. The masses of the people were completely deceived, and were given false courage and confidence. Probably one-half of the Boxer following was secured by means of these assurances.

This idea of a supernatural power, possessed by foreigners, may not have originated in the conduct of the early Christian monks and friars who wandered into China, but is not unlikely to have been strengthened by their pretensions and practices. They carried the bones of saints and martyrs with them, and claimed possession of the power to work miracles. Hardly less ignorant and superstitious than the Chinese, whom they sought to convert from superstition to re-

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ligion, they attributed all things which were beyond their comprehension to the powers of evil, and by charms, relics and crosses, sought to check the further encroachments of what they believed to be the forces of hell. Amazed at the number and wealth of the temples, and distressed at the power of the idols over the minds of the people, they appealed, not to a better knowledge, but to the same order of superstitious notions which created the temples and gave the idols their authority. They thus established in the minds of the natives the idea of a species of rivalry between the forces supposed to emanate from heathen shrines and gods and those which constituted the attributes of a foreign divinity.

Much was said and done of a character directly calculated to foster this idea. The Buddhists enlarged their repertoire by the addition of a Goddess of Mercy in opposition to the Virgin Mary, and a most horrible and effective hell. The monks and friars increased the number of their saints and images, and broadened the scope of their powers. But they carried with them no true education and little genuine enlightenment. This rendered impossible the permanence of any valuable work which they might do. And it may be that, in the absence of

any other visible results of early Christian proselytism in China, this absurd notion of a mystical power attaching to all foreigners remains as the sole surviving fruit of their zeal, self-denial and heroic, though ignorant, labors.

The foregoing sums up what may be termed the original ideas regarding the people of the West, as those ideas were current in China. They were the reverse of complimentary, which was the more unfortunate, since they were held by a race immense in numbers and, as things then were, high in the scale of cultivation and refinement.

The Chinese policy of seclusion was the necessary and inevitable sequence to such ideas. It was by no means an arbitrary, unreasonable dictum. There is abundant evidence, some of which is given elsewhere in this volume, that the Chinese were naturally receptive of all forms of knowledge, sent embassies abroad in search of it, welcomed new theories and practices with their professors and apostles, and that China was freely open to theorist, priest, traveller, merchant, and every other respectable wanderer. China was then not a laggard but a leader in all the more quiet forms of progress. She tested and exploded impracticable schemes then, as we do now. Seven hundred years ago, the Chinese

Government experimented with an irredeemable paper currency, and learned then, what some would-be-wise Western men are still disputing, that it drove all gold and silver money out of the country.

The doors of the empire were never closed against neighbors upon either side. Friendly and commercial relations with all the Asiatic nations, races and tribes have existed, with temporary interruptions caused by war, since the beginning of Chinese history. It was not the foreigner against whom the empire was shut, but the Western foreigner. And in taking this line of policy, China acted as would other nations under like circumstances. She judged the many whom she had never seen by the few whom she saw. She condemned all Western nations, because of the few unwholesome specimens who came clamoring and ravaging to her shores. Their appearance, manners, dress, conduct—everything about them—confirmed Chinese vanity, arrogance, and every other absurd and exalted notion of themselves, and excited contempt, fear and hate of these straggling monstrosities, as they seemed to native eyes, from the remote parts of the earth. Hence came Chinese seclusion.

With such a groundwork, little could be ex-

pected of the superstructure of modern Chinese opinion of Western foreigners. Under the most favorable conditions of intercourse, with all possible mutual conciliation and forbearance, generations must have passed before the old misapprehensions could have been removed, and contempt and fear given place to respect and kindly regard. The Chinese are slow to abandon prejudice, and much tact, patience, and manifest open-handed generosity of feeling would have been called into exercise before the old barrier wall could have been torn down and any desirable relationship have been brought into existence.

Most unfortunately, no such conditions have been fulfilled. True, the Chinese have learned very much of foreigners during the past sixty years. But it has been an unwelcome study upon their part, which of itself would go far to prevent any favorable results. They have been taught, to their bitter sorrow, the aggressive force and persistent determination of Western governments, and the power of the latter to effect their will. They have had many object lessons in Western civilization set before them, some of the highest and best type, and others of the lowest, most repulsive and degrading. They have discovered, or think that they have discovered, which amounts to the same, the underlying

motive and purpose of all Western anxieties upon their account, and conduct toward them. And they have at least recognized the necessity of borrowing one Western idea—the development of the resources of the empire in the line and direction of self-defence.

It must be constantly kept in mind that the Chinese look at all these—men, manners, theories, and things—through their own eyes. And they reach their own conclusions from their own standpoints. That they are often mistaken, constantly misled, and chronically ignorant upon many points, goes without saying. They suspect their most faithful friends, reject unselfish counsel, to fall the next moment into some selfish trap, listen when they ought to be deaf, and speak when silence would be wisdom. It is no part of the scope of this volume to blame or defend them, but, so far as a foreigner may, to faithfully portray their ideas and feelings, and the effect of the various forms of Western association and intercourse upon them. And it must be admitted that this effect, upon the whole, has been to harden and intensify the original anti-foreign feeling of the Chinese, and to give it a broader and more positive foundation. What they once inferred, they claim now to know. The reasons for this unfortunate result are not far to



seek. Some of them are detailed in separate chapters of this volume, others must be mentioned here.

The entire Western atmosphere, so to speak, is intensely repugnant to the Chinese. They have never understood nor admitted that the main purpose for which governments were created was to foster commerce and money-making. From their view-point, that is the petty business of petty men, with which emperors, kings, and presidents should not interfere. Forced to submit to a limitation of her natural rights to regulate her foreign trade, and thus to an interference with the revenue therefrom, the constant pressure for the removal of restrictions and greater trade facilities has been peculiarly irritating to China. She has been able to see nothing in it all but utter selfishness, and a determination to force schemes, profitable to the foreigner, upon her, regardless of any detrimental effect upon the empire. She believes that, while foreigners talk much and advise generously about the development of China, they only desire such development along those specific lines which will place her more hopelessly in their power and make her more profitable to them. She believes that the governments of the West regard China as a somewhat refractory but timid

cow, to be forced to stand and be milked so long as milking proves remunerative, and then, perhaps, to be slaughtered and quartered for beef. The Chinese have failed to discover, in all the discussions with their officials, or concerning the empire and found in print, little broad-minded, unselfish regard for Chinese interests. What, irrespective of all other interests, would be best for China, is a question seldom considered. They know, or think they know, that the inquiry: "What shall be done with China?" is in every man's mouth, while very few are sufficiently generous to desire that China should take herself into her own hands, work out her own problems, and determine her own destiny.

The Chinese are still unaccustomed to the world of to-day. They do not realize that this is an age of trade competition and rivalry, so intense and absorbing that great political governments, with their armies and navies, are substantially reduced to immense and complicated machines for the furtherance of commerce and the accumulation of coin. They do not understand the logic or principle under which immense territories are seized, their inhabitants deprived of the right to govern themselves, however badly, according to their own notions, in order to furnish a new "channel of commerce,"

a fresh mine of gold, to any government strong enough to seize and hold them. But the Chinese are very old-fashioned.

There is, unfortunately, abundant reason for the conclusion reached by the Chinese regarding the selfish character of the interest taken in their country by Western governments and men. Every person who can read or hear, in Europe or America, is aware that the question of the division of China between four great Powers has been generally discussed in recent years. The Chinese are not so doltish and ignorant that they fail to know this. It is not to be expected that they could see any other purpose in the scheme than national greed. And, as they are human beings, the fact of such a discussion excites the same feelings in them as it would in any other nation. When Chinese viceroy after viceroy is urged to reorganize and strengthen the Chinese army, because in its present condition it cannot afford sufficient police protection for foreign trade, and in the same breath is warned against Russia, he knows, without an introduction, that his adviser is an Englishman. And he recognizes only too plainly the underlying motive of the advice. When, again, he is told to beware of Great Britain, that France and Russia are the

only true friends of China, he smiles quietly and draws his own conclusions.

And the Chinese are not amiss in their conclusion that the great European Powers desire the development of the empire only in such ways as would serve their selfish purposes and increase the profits of their merchants. This has been demonstrated over and over again. The writer was once a fellow-passenger upon a railway-train in Japan, with four diplomatists representing European governments at Tokio. In the course of general conversation, the writer remarked that such and such a line of action upon the part of China and Japan would best tend to the development of those countries into great nations. Whereupon the representative of one of the leading European Powers replied: "But, monsieur, it is not the policy of my government to permit the growth of China or Japan into a first-class power." To which the other diplomats gave assent.

The shrewd statesmen of Japan have recognized the existence of this purely selfish European policy for years. Her opposition to the dismemberment of China is based largely upon it. She desires no more of them for near neighbors. And, as long ago as 1881, one of her most

distinguished officials, in informal conversation, urged an alliance between the United States, Japan, and China, to guarantee the autonomy of Corea, and to prevent further encroachments of Europe upon Asiatic territory.

Early in 1896, the Emperor of China sent his distinguished ambassador, Li Hung Chang, to various foreign countries, charged with two missions. He was to represent his Imperial Master at the coronation of the Czar of Russia in Moscow, and he was to thank the governments of Russia, Germany, France, Great Britain and the United States for their recent kindly offices during the war between China and Japan. The eminent Chinese was received everywhere with the utmost favor. He was dined, fêted, and caressed by Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade. The freedom of cities and towns was bestowed upon him by Lord Mayors and Aldermen. Money was spent like water, and attentions of every sort were showered upon him. But presently a murmur arose, which grew into a wail louder and more angry than the "sounding sea." It started in Germany, swept over France and Belgium, crossed the Channel, echoed throughout Great Britain, and finally found articulate voice in the issue of the *London Times* of a certain date in August, which said: "His Excellency, Li

Hung Chang, sailed yesterday from Southampton for New York without having negotiated a loan, or having made a contract of any sort, in Europe."

Naturally sequent to the objectionable spirit just described is an air of patronage and proprietorship which greatly offends the Chinese. No people claim more strenuously the sole ownership and control of their native land than these Orientals. And none believe more absolutely in their right to do so. They are much given themselves to vanity and a patronizing manner. And they are correspondingly keen to detect and quick to resent it in others. It is, in general, only an impalpable and indescribable something which is none the less exasperating to the Chinese because it cannot be pointed out in definite acts, and hence objected to in exact language. At times, however, it is manifested in rudeness toward officials, lofty disregard of the prejudices, feelings, and rights of the common people, and positive brutality toward native servants. To kick a Chinaman if he gets in the way, knock him down if he is impudent, or take a club to a stupid or refractory servant, are, as the Chinese claim, practically held to be among the rights, privileges and liberties of foreigners resident in the Celestial Empire. Satisfaction is seldom or

never obtained for such outrages. And the extent to which they prejudice the masses of the people against everything foreign is very much underestimated. Those who indulge in such misconduct can only be dealt with through their own officials. If they are punished the fact is little likely to be known. And this aggravates the feeling of anger and resentment.

An official connected with one of the Peking legations refused to make a contribution for the relief of the sufferers from a horrible famine in China, upon the ground that it was sent to relieve the empire of a swarm of human vermin. Another, upon being congratulated that a servant of his had escaped from a fall with no more serious injury than a broken leg, demurred, and expressed the wish that the servant had broken his neck. When he was asked for an explanation, he said: "If he had been killed, it would have cost only three dollars for a pine coffin, but now it will be necessary to pay twenty-five dollars for medical attendance."

It must not be understood that these inhuman ideas represent the feeling of a majority of foreigners in China toward the natives. But they are far too common. And, in China as elsewhere, the entire class is injured, in the good esteem of the natives, by acts or expressions of

brutality upon the part of an individual. An incident in which just punishment was inflicted for ill-treatment may be given here, as serving to prove that justice is sometimes done the Chinese in such cases, and also as showing the amusing forms which the native spirit of commercialism will sometimes take. A Chinese servant in Shanghai, better informed in the means of protection afforded him than a majority of his class, caused his master to be arrested for beating and kicking him. The case was tried before the consul, the facts were proved, and the master was fined twenty-five dollars, which sum was paid to the servant as a healing salve for his wounds and bruises. Immediately an epidemic of insolence, idleness, inattention to duty and general worthlessness swept over the entire mass of Chinese servants in Shanghai. They were saucy, abusive, insulting to their masters and mistresses. They were careless, slovenly and destructive of everything which came into their hands. Reproof, mild or sharp, had no effect. They rather seemed to desire and court it, and to strive to provoke their employers to violence. Violence was often the result, then came a prompt complaint, arrest, and a fine of twenty-five dollars for the benefit of the servant. Cases increased rapidly before the foreign courts. But



as soon as a magistrate, better skilled in Chinese character, caused the fine to be paid into court, instead of handing it over to the lacerated domestic, the entire business at once ceased. It had been created by the discovery that a Chinaman of the servant class could earn twenty-five dollars in no way so quickly, and with so little labor, as by being kicked. Hence he sought for that form of exercise with its financial results.

The Chinese complain that this air of proprietorship is constantly manifested in unreasonable demands and impertinent criticisms, in denunciation of any of their officials who manifest a disposition to protect native interests, and that it practically amounts to a refusal to recognize China as the property of the Chinese. They object, perhaps unreasonably, against the application to their empire of those two well-known declarations, said to have been made by the unanimous voice of a religious body: "Resolved, that the righteous shall inherit the earth. Resolved, that we are the righteous."

A somewhat curious comment upon and justification of this protest and complaint is to be found in the recent division of China among the four great European Powers into "spheres of interest." The debate and correspondence over the "open door" may also be appropriately con-

sidered in the same connection. And if further enlightenment is desirable as to the grounds of this feeling among the Chinese, the reader should refer to the utterances of the foreign press, both in China and in Western lands. A distinguished viceroy has been criticised with great bitterness, called a traitor and by other abusive names, in particular, because of a single utterance. He is charged with having said: "We should use the foreigner, and not allow the foreigner to use us." Yet if those identical words had fallen from the lips of any high official in America or Europe, they would have been caught up, inscribed upon banners, and quoted everywhere as the highest expression of patriotic statesmanship.

It hardly need be said that failures of justice upon the part of foreign courts in China, trivial punishments inflicted for grave crimes, and escapes from deserved penalties upon some legal technicality, have done much to embitter the masses of the Chinese. They may have little law, but they have stern and summary means of justice or vengeance, whichever they should be called, and are not slow to apply these means whenever they see fit to do so. Mobs and riots have resulted in China from what the people have believed to be utter disregard, by foreign officers of justice, of their rights of property and life.

An American was arrested in a Chinese city charged with the abduction of a Buddhist nun, a mere girl, for immoral purposes. The penalty attached to this crime under Chinese law is death. As foreigners in China can only be tried before their own officials and under the laws of their native land, he was brought before a United States consul, found guilty and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. He appealed to a higher court, and, while being taken to prison to await its decision, quietly walked away from the officer having him in custody, and was never seen again.

An American, master of a schooner, in a broad channel and a bright summer day, rather than shift his helm, coolly ran down and sunk a Chinese junk, causing the drowning of three men. His vessel was seized by the United States consular authorities pending trial. But he put the officer of the court into an open boat, sailed out of the harbor, and was never brought to justice.

In the spring of 1883, two foreigners, one of them being a British subject, were returning to their homes in Canton after a night spent in gambling and drinking. It was just at daylight, and their way led them through a street where were many Chinese, men, women and children, sitting or lounging about the doors of tea-firing establishments, waiting for the time to be-

gin their day's work. They did not obstruct the street nor give any cause of offence. Both men were somewhat intoxicated, and the Englishman, apparently for amusement, began tapping and counting off the natives as he passed along, with a stick which he carried. This was taken in good part, the Chinese laughing and dodging to avoid his harmless blows. But this sport aroused the tiger in the man's blood, and when he reached his door, near at hand, he ordered a servant to give him a loaded revolver, and, turning about, he emptied the weapon into the bodies of the unoffending Chinese. Two of them were instantly killed, a third was fatally wounded, and others received more or less serious injuries.

The man was not arrested by the British consul until an indignant protest at the delay was made by the Chinese authorities. He was then taken to Hong Kong, tried, found guilty, and sentenced to five years' imprisonment. A most strenuous objection was made to this manifest failure of justice, but it received no attention. The excitement at Canton rose to fever heat, and public meetings, in denunciation of the conduct of the British authorities, were held by the people. While matters were in this critical state, the quartermaster of a British steamer lying at the dock in Canton carelessly shoved a Chinese ped-

dler overboard from the deck of the vessel, and he was drowned. The man guilty of this heedless act was not arrested, and when, later, his trial was demanded by the Viceroy at Canton, the British authorities refused to take any action in his case.

This second incident set the Chinese people into instant commotion. A mob gathered and proceeded to the destruction of property within the limits of the British concession. Private dwellings were respected, and no indignity or harm was offered to human beings. But before the authorities could suppress the outbreak, store-houses were broken open, and several hundred thousand dollars' worth of merchandise was destroyed. The attack was solely directed against British property, but American, German, and French merchants were also sufferers, though in a smaller degree.

The next step in this wretched business was the transfer of it to the diplomatic officials at Peking, and the formulation of claims for damages for the property of foreign merchants destroyed by the mob. In the meantime the imperial authorities had taken up the question of the failure of justice. A statement of marked ability and unanswerable reasoning had been prepared, in which the revision of the case of the murderer and a trial of the reckless quartermas-

ter were insisted upon. The only answer given to this demand was the declaration that Her Britannic Majesty's Government could not interfere with the sacred functions of her courts of justice. The Chinese authorities offered immediate and full payment of all claims excepting those held by British subjects. It refused to pay the latter until the larger question of the inviolability of human life received decent consideration at the hands of Great Britain. After months of tedious discussion, the Chinese Government was persuaded, by the good offices of a friendly legation, to consent to drop, for the moment, the question of failure of justice and to accept arbitration of all claims, including those of British merchants. But the British Minister peremptorily rejected this arrangement. All questions must be abandoned by China, and all claims which he represented paid without arbitration or abatement. And this arbitrary conclusion was eventually submitted to. The sole action taken by the British authorities, in further regard to the murderer, was his removal to another prison, since it was feared that the malarial atmosphere of Hong Kong might have a prejudicial effect upon his health.

No words are needed to explain or excuse the effect of such incidents upon the temper of the

Chinese. They are not of common occurrence, far less universal. They are passed from mouth to mouth throughout the empire and help to determine the popular opinion against foreigners.

It is undeniable that much ill-will has been excited in China by frequent interference upon the part of Roman Catholic priests between native professors of that faith and the local authorities. This is especially the case in the remote southwestern provinces of the empire. The number of adherents there is large, and the officials, having little knowledge of foreigners, are unnecessarily timid in the exercise of their authority and the performance of their duties. They are easily frightened by the threat of a reference or a complaint to a legation at Peking. The priests there, in some cases at least, have undertaken to enforce the idea of the temporal authority of the Church, and have attempted to add political jurisdiction to their spiritual functions. The result is bitter ill-feeling and constant strife. There are more so-called "missionary cases" in the province of Sz Chuan in each year than in the entire remaining seventeen provinces of the empire.

The priests are also charged with having assumed official dress and title, and with the habitual violation of certain sumptuary laws of the empire, laws which are strictly enforced, under

the most severe penalties, against all Chinese. These charges also, in some instances at least, are well founded. A bishop of that Church has been seen travelling the circuit of his diocese in a sedan-chair covered with "imperial yellow," borne by eight men, and attended by a numerous retinue and all dressed in official uniform. The "imperial yellow" is reserved for the exclusive use of the Emperor, and any Chinese sufficiently bold to make use of it would suffer immediate decapitation. The use of sedan-chairs of the larger size is restricted to civil and military officials of and above a specified rank, and none below the grade of viceroy may employ eight bearers. Another bishop journeyed about the network of rivers and canals found within his jurisdiction, with the assumed rank, retinue, and flag of an ambassador, or diplomatic representative of the highest class.

The product of the forces described in this and other chapters of this volume as operating upon the minds of the Chinese, is found in a chronic, deep-seated, and universal hatred of any and every thing which has a Western origin.



## CHAPTER IX.

### OPIUM.

THE history of modern China properly dates only from the year of Our Lord 1842. In August of that year, the first treaty establishing relations with any nation of the modern world—a treaty of amity and commerce with Great Britain—was signed at Nanking. It was not signed willingly, but at the point of the bayonet. By its terms, China was mulcted to the amount of twenty-three millions of dollars, and the island of Hong Kong became British territory. Twelve millions of the money indemnity were levied to pay the cost of the war; three millions more represented debts due by certain Chinese to British merchants, and six millions were collected as compensation for opium seized and destroyed by the Chinese authorities at Canton in May, 1839. It was also stipulated in the treaty that five ports in southern Chinese waters should be opened to British trade. Four of

these had already been occupied by the British forces.

With nations no less than individuals, the nature of their mutual relations will depend largely upon the circumstances under which their acquaintance began. It may safely be claimed that to knock a man down is not the surest path to his high esteem, and that to kick open his front door will not guarantee an invitation to dinner. It was most unfortunate that the use of force was necessary to the establishment of foreign relations with China. What the Chinese will believe, to the end of time, to have been the real motive for the use of force renders it substantially impossible to hope for any cordiality upon their part, in intercourse or relations with the nations of the Western world. And the facts go far to justify them in their belief. It is difficult to move about in China without inhaling the fumes of opium. And it is impossible to take even a first step in any study of her people, of their feeling toward and ideas concerning the outside world, without coming into contact with the drug itself. No true picture of modern China, in its attitude toward progress, in the opinions and feelings which dominate the lives and control the conduct of its people, from the palace to the mud

hut, toward all men and all things that are foreign, can be correctly painted unless opium is mixed with the colors. Not all Chinese smoke it. But it has played a large and deadly part in distorting the vision, befogging the judgment, and embittering the minds of the entire mass of the nation. The very name of the drug in Chinese proves it not to be indigenous to the country, but of foreign origin. The proper name is "yahpian," a manifest attempt to pronounce the word "opium." It is, however, commonly called "foreign poison," "foreign medicine," "foreign dirt," "foreign devil's dirt," and "foreign devil's medicine." And the reputation of all foreigners, irrespective of nationality, is, in the minds of the Chinese, hopelessly besmirched and soiled by it.

It is supposed that the first knowledge of this product of the poppy reached China from Western Asia, and probably from Persia. From early times, rigid laws prohibited the cultivation of the poppy and the use of opium throughout the empire, and these laws were as thoroughly enforced as similar legislation in any part of the world. The police were empowered, without special warrant, to enter the homes of those suspected of the vice, search their premises, persons, and even "to smell their breaths." The punishment for

the use of the drug was very severe. And there is no reason to suppose that up to A.D. 1775 any appreciable proportion of the Chinese were addicted to the habit.

The British East India Company had a monopoly of the opium trade in India, and in A.D. 1773 made a small shipment to China as an experiment. The speculation doubtless proved profitable, for, seven years later, two small vessels were anchored off the Chinese coast, not far from Canton, as store-ships, to facilitate the traffic. At this time the total importation did not exceed a thousand chests each year. In 1781 the East India Company sent a vessel direct to Canton loaded with sixteen hundred chests, but it could not be sold to advantage, and was reshipped out of the country. In 1793 the Chinese authorities at Canton made serious complaint of the store-ships mentioned above. Their cargo of opium was thereupon loaded into a single ship, which proceeded to the mouth of the river below Canton, where she remained for more than a year. The vessel was not molested, but her cargo could not be disposed of. She finally went to sea, where the opium was transferred to another vessel, which brought it directly back to Canton, where it was sold under the disguise of medicine. About this time the

smuggling of opium into Southern China was brought to the notice of the authorities at Peking, and in A.D. 1800, the importation was prohibited under heavy penalties, because, as the Emperor declared, "it wasted the time and destroyed the property of the Chinese people." The practice of importing it disguised as medicine, however, still continued, and in 1809 the consignees of foreign ships at the mouth of the river below Canton were required to give bonds that no ships discharging cargo there had opium on board. The smuggling still went on, and in 1820 the viceroy at Canton and the collector of customs issued an order forbidding any vessel having opium on board to enter the port, and holding pilots and consignees personally responsible for any violations of the order.

In spite of imperial decrees, prohibitive regulations, and all of the efforts of the higher authorities, the contraband trade prospered, and the illicit importation of opium increased to an alarming extent. The profits of the traffic were so enormous that large sums of money could be spent in bribery, and the cupidity of petty officials afforded easy opportunities for evasion of the law. A regular tariff of blackmail was agreed upon, and paid to local officers at the rate of a fixed sum per chest of opium landed. Fast na-

tive boats, heavily armed and manned, received the drug from foreign vessels and landed it, the nature of the seacoast below Canton rendering detection almost impossible. If attacked, the crews of these boats fought desperately, as prompt decapitation was the penalty of capture. The traffic grew to such proportions that again a depot of receiving ships, for the receipt and distribution of opium, was established between Macao and the mouth of the river below Canton, changing anchorage to different quarters during the typhoon season for greater security.

The traffic also spread up the Chinese coast to the north of Canton. In 1831, the *Jamesina*, a small craft, went as far north as Foo Chow and sold opium to the amount of \$330,000. Small, fast-sailing foreign vessels cruised along the entire coast of China, going even to Manchuria, peddling opium. In some cases, owing to the incorruptibility of native officials, these ventures resulted in loss. In the main, however, the business was enormously profitable. Regular lines of swift opium schooners were gradually placed in the service, and receiving ships established at certain points to furnish a constant supply for the rapidly increasing demand. None of these vessels being Chinese, in the absence of treaty concessions, they had no right of entry to any

Chinese port. The local authorities, timid, and afraid to employ force, first contented themselves with the issue of paper commands and exhortations, until, finding these of no avail, they in turn were debauched by bribes, and winked at a contraband and deadly traffic which they lacked the energy to destroy.

During all this time, that is to say, from 1773 to 1839—a period of sixty-six years—not one word is known to have been uttered by the British Government against this nefarious traffic. It had practically succeeded to the rich inheritance of the British East India Company, though the formal assumption of direct control did not come until later. With this inheritance it had acquired the monopoly of opium production in India. It must have known that the importation of opium was in violation of the laws of China, and that determined efforts were being made by the government at Peking to suppress it, efforts so determined that death was the penalty meted out to any native caught in the prosecution of the traffic. It must have known that the large fleet of fast-sailing, opium-smuggling vessels, with few exceptions, flew—and disgraced—the British flag. It professed an earnest desire to establish friendly and commercial relations with the Chinese Empire. Yet it had not a word to say. Great Brit-

ain only spoke out when the Emperor showed his determination to stop the traffic at all costs, and when his servant, sent to Canton for that special purpose, proved by drastic measures that he had the courage and determination to do his master's will. Then Great Britain was aroused to utterance.

The crash came in 1839.

During the years 1837 and 1838, the struggle all along the Chinese coast, between the authorities upon the one hand and the smugglers upon the other, had increased in intensity. The former, spurred by evidence that the illegal traffic was attracting serious attention at Peking, and by the receipt of more stern commands therefrom, either doubled their efforts or their price for connivance. The smugglers were correspondingly stimulated by the increased demand for opium and the enormous profits derived from the business. The foreign dealers rarely came into conflict with the authorities. They made use of the natives as catspaws, who took the lion's share of the danger, but not his share of the profits.

That the British Government was interested in the traffic and the direction which that interest took is shown by a correspondence between Captain Elliot, Superintendent of British Trade at Canton, and Rear-Admiral Capel, commanding



the British fleet in Indian waters. In 1837, Captain Elliot wrote to the admiral, requesting him to send a vessel of war to China to visit the points where the store-ships for opium were anchored and the trade carried on, "as one of the movements best calculated, either to carry the provincial government back to the system of connivance which has hitherto prevailed, or to hasten onward the legalization measure from the court" (at Peking). The British sloop-of-war Raleigh was sent to China in compliance with this request, where she remained many months, and where, among other services to this British trade, she secured the release of the foreign portion of the crew of the opium brig *Fairy*, who had been arrested and were held at Foo Chow. But her Britannic Majesty's Government evidently considered that the traffic was of sufficient importance to demand the presence of more than a single vessel of war, for, in the same year, Admiral Capel received orders from Her Majesty's secretary directing him to proceed to China in person.

By the end of 1838, the traffic had grown to such proportions that there were more than fifty small vessels, flying the British and American flags, cruising upon the river between Canton and the sea, nearly all of which were engaged in smuggling opium! Heavily manned and armed,

the Chinese revenue cruisers did not dare attack them, and their business was carried on without any pretence of disguise or secrecy. Upon the 10th of March, 1839, Commissioner Lin arrived at Canton and entered upon the discharge of his official duties. Because of his known energy and determination, he had been selected by the Emperor, Tao Kwang, and sent to Canton to thoroughly eradicate the opium traffic, and was invested with the most unqualified authority ever conferred upon a Chinese subject. It was reported that the Emperor, while conferring with Lin before the departure of the latter from the capital, burst into tears and exclaimed: "How can I die and go to meet the spirits of my imperial father and ancestors until these direful evils are removed?"

The Imperial Commissioner was equally prompt and positive in the execution of his mission. Eight days after his arrival, he issued an order requiring Chinese and foreign merchants to deliver, within three days, every particle of opium in the port of Canton to him and to give bonds that they would bring no more. Death was the penalty to be paid for failure to comply with this demand, and the Chinese merchants were held personally accountable for the compliance of foreigners. At that time there were

twenty-two vessels having as cargo, in part, 20,291 chests of opium in the harbor of Canton. At an average weight of 125 pounds per chest, it would amount to 2,536,375 pounds of opium, and it was estimated to be worth at the current market price about nine millions of dollars. It had paid a tax of nearly that sum to the British Crown before being sold by it in India for shipment to smugglers upon the Chinese coast.

It is unnecessary to give details of the short but acrid correspondence which followed this demand. It must be admitted that much of Lin's language was arrogant and offensive in tone. He had had no previous dealings with foreigners, was ignorant of the official *status* of Captain Elliot, and regarded him merely as the hired chief of a body of merchants, the lowest class in the social scale. Upon the other hand, he appealed to the foreigners to comply with his demand upon four good grounds: Because they were men and had reason; because the laws of China forbade the use of opium under very severe penalties; because they should have pity for those who suffered from using it; and because of their present straits, from which compliance with the order could alone release them. It must be explained that Commissioner Lin had placed a cordon of guards about all the ships, and

residences of those concerned in the traffic, and forbidden the Chinese to furnish them with food or water. It must be evident that, whatever his methods, Lin was, upon the whole, moderate in his demands. In view of the facts, he would have been entirely justified in the seizure and confiscation of all the ships with their entire cargoes and in the punishment of all persons engaged in the illicit traffic, natives and foreigners alike.

The foreign merchants first attempted to bribe the Imperial Commissioner, and a "contribution" of 1037 chests was subscribed among them for that purpose. This scheme failing, the entire amount of opium was eventually surrendered, and most of the foreign merchants gave a written pledge "not to deal in opium nor to attempt to introduce it into the Chinese Empire." Many of them, however, broke their pledges and soon after again became actively engaged in the trade. As soon as the opium had reached the hands of Commissioner Lin, he caused the entire quantity to be dumped into trenches prepared for the purpose, where it was mixed with lime and salt water, and then drawn off by creeks into the sea. The operation was watched most closely to prevent any portion of the drug being abstracted, and one Chinese, caught in the at-

tempt to conceal and carry away a small quantity, was beheaded upon the spot.

Commissioner Lin was charged with two duties by his imperial master: the suppression of the opium traffic at all hazards, and the restoration of legitimate commerce, which had been practically destroyed. He failed in both. In spite of the written pledge given by the merchants, the sales of opium began again, even before the destruction of the immense quantity surrendered to him, and the business increased rapidly as soon as it was known that so large a quantity had actually been destroyed. Collisions between the Chinese authorities and people upon the one side, and those suspected or known to be engaged in the contraband traffic, increased in frequency and in their serious character, and rendered all honest commerce impossible. In the meantime intelligence of the general conduct of Commissioner Lin at Canton, and especially of the seizure and destruction of opium by him, reached London, and at last the British lion found his voice. It was not used to crush out a traffic which was both morally and politically indefensible, but to demand "satisfaction and reparation for the late injurious proceedings of certain officers of the Emperor of China against certain of our officers and sub-

jects." In the debates in Parliament upon the subject, Sir John Hobhouse said that the British Government had done nothing to stop the opium trade because it was profitable. Lord Melbourne said: "We possess immense territories peculiarly fitted for raising opium, and though he could wish that the government were not so directly concerned in the traffic, he was not prepared to pledge himself to relinquish it." And Lord Ellenborough, with even greater frankness, spoke of the seven and a half millions of dollars revenue then annually derived "from foreigners" by means of the contraband trade which, if the opium monopoly were given up and the cultivation of poppy abandoned, they must seek elsewhere.

The British forces ordered to exact reparation for the conduct of Commissioner Lin arrived near Canton in June, 1841, and announced a blockade of that port. Skirmishes interlarded with discussions continued throughout the remainder of the year, and were spread over the entire coast of China. In January, 1842, an agreement was reached between the commissioners appointed by Great Britain and China, by which the latter was to pay an indemnity of six millions of dollars and cede the island and harbor of Hong Kong to the British Crown. This adjust-

ment of the difficulty was promptly repudiated by the sovereigns of both countries—by the Emperor of China because he was unable to see why he should pay an indemnity for an attempt to crush out a contraband traffic, and by the British Queen because the indemnity for interference with her monopoly was deemed insufficient. The opium war was therefore continued until the following August, when it ended with the capture of Nanking, and the negotiation of a treaty as mentioned at the head of this chapter.

It is a curious fact that the active cause of all the trouble—opium—was not mentioned in the treaty. Sir Henry Pottinger, the British Commissioner, was unable to secure the legalization of the traffic, and would not undertake the responsibility, on behalf of his government, of any attempt to suppress it. The Chinese Commissioners would not even consent to discuss the opium question until assured that it was introduced merely as a topic for private conversation. Then, according to a British official report of the interview, they inquired eagerly: "Why we would not act fairly toward them by prohibiting the growth of the poppy in our dominions, and thus effectually stop a traffic so pernicious to the human race." Sir Henry Pottinger's answer might have been anticipated. He replied, ac-

ording to the same authority, that the remedy for the evil "rests entirely with yourselves. If your people are virtuous, they will desist from the evil practice; and if your officers are incorruptible and obey your orders, no opium can enter your country. The discouragement of the growth of the poppy in our territories rests principally with you, for nearly the entire produce cultivated in India travels east to China." A truly interesting answer, and advice of the highest moral worth, when it came from the lips of an active agent of a war costing thousands of lives, and a representative of a so-called Christian nation which had that very day mulcted China in the sum of twenty-one millions of dollars and the cession of valuable territory, because certain incorruptible Chinese officers had endeavored to discourage the growth of the poppy in India by preventing opium from entering China! It may be said in passing that this same Sir Henry Pottinger went out of his way some years later to declare "in a public manner," as he himself states, that "the great, and perhaps I might say sole, objection to the trade, looking at it morally and abstractly, that I have discovered is that it is at present contraband and prohibited by the laws of China . . . but I have striven to bring about legalization; and were that point



once effected, I am of opinion that its most objectionable feature would be altogether removed."

Other Englishmen were not so purblind or venal. Shortly after the conclusion of the treaty at Nanking, a large number of English merchants and manufacturers memorialized Sir Robert Peel, claiming that commerce with China could not be conducted on a safe and satisfactory basis so long as the contraband trade in opium was allowed. They maintained that opium would enervate and impoverish the consumers of it, and thus disable them from purchasing other wares. And the memorialists pointed out that the opium then smuggled into China exceeded in value the total amount of tea and silk exported, as proof of the rapid impoverishment of the empire. This memorial received no attention at the hands of the British Government. None need have been expected, for the British Government itself was the actual trader in opium, and the profits were too large to permit any consideration for the interests of smaller merchants and manufacturers. And perhaps the memorialists deserved no notice. Their motives were purely selfish. They showed no care for the impoverishment and debauchery of the Chinese nation, except so far as those results of the traffic might

touch their own pockets. And they were not alone in their selfishness. In all the discussions to which the opium war gave rise in Great Britain, seldom was a word uttered about the morality of the contraband traffic or the deadly effects of the vice upon its victims. The entire subject was argued solely from the standpoint of its effect upon British commerce. One newspaper went so far as to suggest the manufacture of morphine to tempt the Chinese, so that they might have opium in a more delicate form to suit the taste of the higher classes.

During the years following the negotiation of the treaty of Nanking, the illegal trade was pushed and extended in every direction. Heavily-armed opium schooners made their trips up and down the entire Chinese coast, from Hong Kong to the mouth of the Peiho, with almost the regularity of modern mail steamers. Opium was openly smoked in many of the large cities. The old laws forbidding the purchase, sale, or use of the drug under the penalty of death were still in force. But no official dared put them into execution. The Chinese Government had suffered bitter humiliation and punishment for daring to interfere with the trade, for venturing to enforce its own laws within its own territory upon its own people and such foreigners as were guilty of

crimes against the state and within its jurisdiction. It could do nothing more.

It is true that Sir Henry Pottinger issued proclamations, warning British subjects that the importation of opium into Chinese ports was illegal, and that persons engaged in it would be granted no protection from the British authorities. He also forbade British vessels from going north of Shanghai under pain of seizure and confiscation. But when Captain Hope, of the British man-of-war *Thalia*, stopped several opium schooners which were going north of Shanghai, he was promptly removed from his command and ordered to India, where—to quote the words of Lord Palmerston's despatch—"he could not interfere in such a manner with the undertakings of British subjects." This incident, and others of a similar nature, proved that the orders and proclamations of the British representative were mere idle words, for which neither respect nor obedience was desired. Their sole purpose was to throw the responsibility for the traffic upon the Chinese. And the British men-of-war upon the China station were not there to suppress opium smuggling, but to see that it was not interfered with.

This state of affairs continued until 1860, when, at the close of another war with China,

Great Britain secured, by the treaty of Tientsin, what had been her determined object from the first—the legalization of the opium traffic. Though there was much friction between the governments of China and Great Britain, growing out of disputed points in the treaty of Nan-king and the general attitude of the Chinese, yet the immediate cause of the second war, like the first, was the opium traffic. The Chinese authorities at Canton had seized a small vessel called the Arrow. She was owned and manned by Chinese, though illegally flying the British flag, and was engaged in the illicit traffic. These facts—and they were proved to be facts—were set forth by the Chinese in answer to a demand for reparation made by Sir John Bowring, the same gentleman, by the way, who wrote the beautiful hymn, "In the Cross of Christ I Glory." The only answer made by that Christian poet and British representative was the destruction of the forts below Canton and the bombardment of that city. This second war, begun in 1857 at Canton, was ended at Peking in 1860. As already stated, the terms of peace with which it ended included the legalization of the trade in opium. Since the accomplishment of this result, Great Britain, though she has formulated many serious and genuine grievances

against China, has never seen occasion to seek correction of them with the sword.

Perhaps a very brief analysis of the financial side of the opium traffic will explain the moderation and complacency shown by Great Britain toward China during the past forty years. In securing the legal entry of opium into Chinese ports, England dictated the import duty chargeable upon it, and had fixed that duty at about forty cents a pound. The same pound of opium had paid the British Crown a tax of a trifle more than three dollars and one-half before leaving India, or about nine times as much as could be levied upon it at the port of destination. A chest of opium, containing an average of 125 pounds, paid from \$125 to \$130 to the Indian farmer who cultivated the poppy and produced the crude drug; about \$425 to the British Government; and about \$50 to the Chinese revenue. To enlarge the figures again, in the year 1878-9 the total export from India was 91,200 chests, from which England derived an income of \$38,500,000, upon which China was allowed to collect only \$4,560,000. Surely to a government caring only for the money outturn of any business, this division of income would naturally furnish food for satisfaction and complacency.

It required about 1,700,000 acres of land to produce this quantity of opium. To what extent the diversion of that large area from poppies to the cultivation of food products would tend to lessen or prevent the horrible famines so frequent in India, is a question for the philanthropist rather than the financier.

It has already been stated that in 1842 certain British merchants and manufacturers protested against the continuance of the traffic in opium, upon the ground of the impoverishment of the Chinese nation, and their consequent inability to purchase other products. The official returns of Chinese foreign trade for 1871 show that more than three-fifths of the total imports from a British source consisted of opium. In that year nearly \$64,000,000 worth of the drug was imported, while the total exports of all Chinese commodities, to all parts of the world, was less than \$105,000,000. John Bull's bill against China that year for opium furnished was nearly three times the amount due to China for all merchandise sold to any nation except the English. And it was more than three-fifths of the entire sum due China for all native produce exported to foreign parts. Two-thirds of all tea and silk sent abroad from China was paid for with Indian

opium. And if the large quantity of the drug still smuggled into the country could be valued, it would become evident that China received only opium for her enormous export of those two staple articles. Well may Great Britain be moderate and complacent in her treatment of the Chinese Government. She balances the accounts of the world with China with opium. And when a foreigner of any other nationality pays a debt due the Chinese, the money goes, not to the Celestials, but to London.

By nearly all British writers upon the opium question, it is assumed that the Chinese authorities were not in earnest in their efforts to suppress the contraband trade. It is, perhaps, natural that they should raise such a point, in order to justify the course of their government, and to hoodwink the outside world. But they know better. The facts of the entire history speak for themselves. Commissioner Lin went to Canton with specific instructions from his imperial master, Tao Kwang, to suppress the opium traffic and reopen legitimate commerce. It is true that in 1834 and the years succeeding, the Chinese officials had interfered with the legitimate foreign trade at Canton, where it had been carried on for many years. "But there were reasons for their action. Their chief cause of complaint was the in-

roduction of opium by the merchants, and for years they attempted by every means in their power, by stopping all foreign trade, by demands for the prohibition of the traffic in the drug, and by vigilant preventive measures, to put a stop to its importation. On the 3d April, 20,283 (20,291) chests of opium were handed over to the mandarins, and were by them destroyed—a sufficient proof that they were in earnest in their endeavors to suppress the traffic.” The authority here quoted is the “*Encyclopædia Britannica*,” which surely cannot be held to be anti-British in its sympathies.

It is paying but scant respect to the intelligence and good sense of the average reader to discuss another argument brought forward by apologists for the course of Great Britain. Yet it must be mentioned here. The argument is that the use of opium does the Chinese no harm; that, owing to some peculiarity in their physical construction, it is not only innocuous, but as necessary to them “as his beer to the Englishman.” The letter of Sir Henry Pottinger upon this point has already been quoted. Another apologist speaks of the drug as a “useful soother, a harmless luxury, and a precious medicine, except to those who abuse it,” and he attributes the “persevering economy and never-



ceasing industry" of the Chinese to its use! Others have described it as "harmless as milk" to the Oriental!

If the mere thinking about opium can so completely narcotize the judgment, becloud the good sense, and distort the vision of otherwise clear-headed, logical-minded Englishmen, what must the effect of actual and constant use of the drug be upon the Chinese, who perhaps have not the same stamina with which to resist the effects of the habit! In spite of all this special pleading, and array of imaginary facts, the truth remains that the habitual use of any form of opium by any human being, Occidental or Oriental, constitutes a vice more hopeless and deadly in its results than any other known among men. There are ample proofs of this statement, so far as it refers to the people of Europe or America, and the Chinaman forms no exception to the rule. After all has been said about his peculiarities, he is compounded from the same formula with the Anglo-Saxon or other Western races. Opium is more deadly than alcohol, because it fastens its grip more quickly and firmly upon the victim. No language can exaggerate the evil results of the habit. No honest person who has seen its effects upon the Chinese can describe it

as other than an awful curse. To force it upon China was a crime against humanity.

One Chinese writer describes it as tenfold more deadly than arsenic, inasmuch as the suicide by arsenic dies at once, while the opium victim suffers untold horrors and dies by inches. He mentions cases in which men have pawned their wives and sold their daughters in order to procure the drug. And such cases are by no means rare. The writer has seen an able-bodied and apparently rugged laboring Chinese tumble all in a heap upon the ground utterly nerveless and unable to stand, because the time for his dose of opium had come, and until the craving was supplied he was no longer a man, but the merest heap of bones and flesh. In the great majority of cases death is the sure result of any determined reform. The poison has rotted the whole system, and no power to resist the simplest disease remains. In many years' residence in China, the writer knew of but four men who finally abandoned the habit. Three of them lived but a few months thereafter. The fourth survived his reformation, but was a life-long invalid.

Though the Chinese Government was at last, in 1860, whipped into an assent to the importation of opium, its bitter opposition to the traffic

was in no degree lessened. It simply dared no longer attempt to enforce its own laws. Efforts to do this, begun thirty and more years before, had resulted in the loss of thousands of lives, in repeated and almost uninterrupted humiliation, in the payment of large indemnities to Great Britain, and, more recently, in the capture of the Taku forts and Tientsin, in the investment of Peking by a foreign army, the seizure of one of the city gates, the plunder and destruction of the Summer Palace, the flight of the Emperor and his death in what was practical exile, and, to crown all, a coerced consent to the hideous opium traffic.

From the point of view of the Chinese Government, and that alone is of concern in this chapter, all of these evils, sorrows and losses came as the result of a patriotic determination upon its part to protect its people against impoverishment, debauchery and destruction, by the enforcement of the laws of the empire. Again, from their point of view, the Chinese authorities deserved success. They met with the most humiliating and hopeless failure. They had pledged themselves to sit with folded arms, while their ancient and wholesome laws were violated and their people sucked dry of morality, manhood, and money, by a black vampire from India, let loose

upon them by Great Britain, to satisfy its own insatiable greed.

China dared no longer resist. Nothing remained but the poor privilege to plead, to beg, and remonstrate. And this she continued to do at intervals, until even Chinese persistency was exhausted by refusals, rebuffs, or contemptuous silence. She made offers of concessions to any form of legitimate commerce in any part of the empire, if only the opium trade might be stopped, either at once or by a graded reduction in the annual import. Meeting with no success in this direction, she asked permission to increase the duty upon the drug. Great Britain promptly accepted the concessions offered in return for this poor favor, and then refused to permit the increase of duty.

In the summer of 1873, the writer had occasion to discuss certain outstanding matters between the United States and China with Wen Hsiang, then prime minister, and one of the most able statesmen of the empire. Official business having been concluded, the prime minister said: "Now let us forget that we represent two different governments and only remember that we are friends, as I have two perplexing questions about which I am most anxious to obtain your advice." This having been agreed to, Wen

Hsiang made the following statement, of one of the two questions upon which he sought friendly counsel: As a result of long-continued and anxious discussions over the opium traffic, and the alarming spread of the vice of opium-smoking throughout the empire—discussions in which the Empress Dowager, the Empress Mother, the Imperial Family Council, the Cabinet, and all the viceroys throughout the empire had taken part—it had been decided to prepare a personal appeal in the name of the young Emperor, then under age, to the Queen of Great Britain, setting forth the evils being wrought upon the Chinese nation in consequence of the importation of opium, and begging her, in the name of a common humanity, to agree with him upon measures by which the traffic might be at once, or gradually, brought to an end.

Such a letter was prepared. It showed the dreadful harm already wrought in China by opium and increasing with frightful rapidity. It pointed out that the traffic was the foe to all right-ful commerce, and if allowed to continue would put an end to the latter, by leaving the Chinese neither money nor commodities to exchange for foreign products. It offered anything that might be desired in the way of concession to British trade, anywhere in the empire, agreeing

in advance to yield to any demand, if only this one curse against which China had fought in vain for years might be removed. And it begged Her Majesty, both as a queen and as a woman, to heed the appeal, and to concert measures for the suppression of the hideous opium curse. The letter was phrased with the utmost care to avoid wounding the pride of, or giving any offence to, the British nation. It was despatched in 1868 through the British Legation at Peking, the minister being requested to take special measures to ensure that it reached the hands of the Queen.

Some six months having passed and no reply coming to hand, a member of the Cabinet inquired casually of the British Minister at Peking whether any answer had been received to the letter of His Majesty to the Queen. He was told that none had come. This was repeated several times, at intervals of months, with always the same result. Then an unofficial communication was sent to Her Majesty's representative requesting him to inform the Chinese Cabinet whether the Emperor's letter had reached the Queen, and, if so, when a response to it might be expected. After the interval necessary for transmission of inquiry and answer, they were told that the Emperor's letter had reached Her

Majesty, but no intimation was given concerning an answer from her. Again, after waiting some months, the Chinese Cabinet addressed a formal despatch to the British Minister, requesting to know when they might be favored with a reply to His Imperial Majesty's letter. To this despatch they received a prompt answer, saying that no reply had been received, and adding curtly that none need be expected. And Wen Hsiang desired the advice of the writer as to what had best be done in view of these facts.

Many months after this conversation and after the death of the Chinese prime minister, who was a party to it, the writer came upon an article in the *International Review*—a London publication—written by a distinguished British advocate and Queen's Counsel, entitled, "Great Britain, India, China and the Opium Question." In it the writer mentioned this appeal of the Emperor Tung Chih to Queen Victoria, and said: "To the everlasting shame and disgrace of the British nation, no answer was ever made to this appeal. The reason is obvious, no answer was possible."

In January, 1875, the Chinese Government prepared and submitted to all governments, then represented at Peking, a lengthy and detailed complaint of the opium traffic, and requested the

action of all friendly nations in bringing it to an end. The British Government answered with a series of counter charges, but promised nothing with regard to opium.

In the summer of 1876 serious diplomatic negotiations occurred at Chefoo between Sir Thomas Wade, then British Minister, and His Excellency, Li Hung Chang. The murder of a British consular officer upon the border line between China and Burmah, and various other matters, had made these negotiations necessary. As a result, and while denying that the murder was done by Chinese, the Chinese Government made reparation for the crime, and agreed, among other things, to open several additional ports upon the coast to British commerce, only asking in return the privilege of increasing the import duty upon opium from forty cents a pound to about fifty-five. Her Britannic Majesty's Government promptly accepted the various concessions made by China, sent consular officers to each of the new ports and opened trade in them, and then repudiated the Chefoo convention, or rather that part of it which allowed China to increase the opium duty fifteen cents a pound.

In November, 1880, a commission, appointed by the President, concluded at Peking two treaties between the United States and China.



The second treaty contained a stringent article forbidding American citizens from taking any part in the opium trade in China. They could neither buy nor sell the drug, nor transport it upon their ships. A couple of days after these treaties were signed, the writer had an informal interview with His Excellency, Li Hung Chang, then viceroy at Tientsin. The viceroy, after expressing his deep satisfaction that the United States had withdrawn from all complicity with the traffic in opium, said: "I have watched and have had to do with the foreign relations of China for many years. I have read the Bible, in which you foreigners believe, and have seen in it the same golden rule which Confucius teaches. And this action of the United States in forbidding its people to deal with opium in China is the first and only application of that golden rule to be found in all the conduct of foreign governments toward China."

The Chinese statesman did not speak without some warrant in making this sweeping declaration. If the entire correspondence upon the opium question, from beginning to end, had been between the Emperor of China and the Queen of Great Britain—between a heathen emperor and a Christian queen, as each is commonly called—could be submitted to an honest outsider, who

knew nothing of the religious pretensions of either, there is every reason to fear that he would conclude that, by some error of type-setting or proof-reading, the adjectives "heathen" and "Christian" had been interchanged.

Utterly discouraged and disheartened at the failure of all efforts, whether by force or remonstrance, to check the importation of opium, the Chinese Government abandoned the attempt. And it also ceased to restrain the cultivation of the poppy in China. The ancient laws forbidding the use of the soil for such purpose were not repealed. For the Emperor, the author of all law, being, like the Pope, held infallible, never directly rescinds any action taken by his imperial ancestors. But the laws were not enforced, and large areas of the country gradually blossomed out with poppies. A member of the Chinese Cabinet frankly admitted that this policy had been adopted after full consideration. They dared not attempt to restrict the importation of Indian opium nor the punishment of natives for smoking it. The only recourse left them was to fight fire with fire, to cut off the demand for the foreign drug with an abundant native supply. He cynically claimed two advantages for this line of action—the native drug being produced in a cooler climate, was less injurious than the

Indian, and the money spent upon it would be retained in China, and would not pass into the pockets of foreigners.

No extended argument can be needed to make plain the inevitable results of the opium traffic upon every phase of development and progress in China. It has been a triple bar against both, since it has impoverished the empire in purse, muscle and brain. The forced introduction of opium to China constituted a greater crime against humanity than the African slave trade. And Great Britain herself has been the most serious foe to the increase of foreign commerce with China and the development of her enormous natural resources. She has been the enemy to the honest trade of every nation with that empire. For foreign commerce must depend mainly upon internal prosperity. And the question how much increase in foreign traffic may be expected with any nation, whose people are from year to year more hopelessly stupefied, besotted and impoverished by opium is a question which answers itself. No growing demand for foreign cotton goods or woollens may be expected from men—mere wretched bundles of bones—who, because of opium, are unable to buy enough of the meanest native rags to cover their nakedness. The conveniences and luxuries of Western civiliza-

tion furnish no attraction to the man whose only convenience is an opium lamp and whose only idea of luxury is the opium pipe.

There is a peculiar fitness in the fact that Great Britain is herself the greatest sufferer from her vicious policy. She is the only European nation which sells any appreciable amount of commodities to the Chinese. Russia is not an exporting country. Germany has become such only in recent years. The silks of France naturally find no market in China, the mother land of all silk industries; the Chinese fortunately have acquired no appetite for her wines or brandies, and the infinite variety of French fancy articles appeal neither to their taste nor their pockets. In 1871 the entire imports into China from the whole of Continental Europe amounted to barely \$300,000. During the same period British imports, excluding opium, amounted to more than \$63,000,000. And the hundreds of millions of dollars which she has drawn from China, during the past sixty years, for opium represent a small sum when compared with what might have been gained, to the advantage of both countries, if she had suppressed the sale of the drug, and confined herself to lines of honest commerce.

Another serious and widespread result of the

opium traffic is the intense hatred of all things and all men foreign. It is quite unnecessary to vilify the missionary body, in order to discover the cause of this bitter anti-foreign feeling so universal in China. While other causes have co-operated to generate and sustain it, the largest single cause, the most important factor, is the source, history and results of opium. And that man must be blind indeed to the ordinary operations of human nature who could expect any other result. Let any intelligent, fair-minded reader put himself into the place of the Chinese, run over in his mind the history of the use of this narcotic poison in that great Oriental empire, and then decide what the resultant and inevitable feeling must be toward the authors of such a scourge.

Probably no people upon earth ever possessed so much national vanity and conceit as the Chinese. It had been bred in them for hundreds of years, and was justified in their minds by the fact that the only races with which they had come into contact for many centuries were greatly inferior to them in every respect. From their point of view, they have been attacked and overcome by an unknown and necessarily inferior race, for the sake of the money which was to be made by forcing a deadly poison upon them. Is

any other explanation of the anti-foreign feeling in the Chinese Empire necessary?

It covers foreigners of all nationalities, because the mass of the people are able to make no discrimination among them. Opium is a foreign drug forced upon them by foreigners—that covers the whole question. Every victim of the drug, and he is everywhere to be found, is a walking advertisement and argument to the evil of everything foreign. And in the case of the slave to the vice, his brain is narcotized, and every moral and manly quality deadened by the fumes of the Indian drug, but the hatred of the foreigner who has furnished and forced this deadly comfort upon him is cultivated and intensified by the sense of his own degradation.

The writer listened for some time one afternoon to a missionary, addressing a large gathering of natives upon the street of an interior city of China. Near by and upon the outskirts of the crowd stood a middle-aged Chinese, evidently of the literary class and having a countenance of much intelligence. Physically he was a mere walking skeleton. The tiny opium jar in his hand, the expression of his eyes, and the brown stain upon one of his fingers, all marked him as a slave to the narcotic poison. After listening a few minutes to the preacher, he turned away with

an indescribable scowl of hatred upon his face, and snarled out as he left: " You foreigners exhort us to virtue! First take away your opium, and then talk to us about your Ya Su " (Jesus).

China is permitted to establish no national protective tariff, but she has a national protective sentiment of inveterate hostility to every product, be it a man, a thing, or an idea, coming from the Western world. It hinders and hurts every line of progress, at every point. And the main source and feeder of this sentiment is to be found in the opium traffic.

The modern great Chinese Wall is mainly constructed of chests of opium.

## CHAPTER X.

### FOREIGN AGGRESSION.

THE great and persistent fear of the Chinese race, since the inception of relations with the people of America and Europe, has been the absorption of the empire by the latter. The matter is discussed and debated in every tea-house and place of public resort. The most ridiculous stories and absurd statements find ready credence among the ignorant classes, whose fears cause nothing which bears upon the question to seem grotesque. The more intelligent and official classes, while they discredit some of the fairy tales in circulation, still believe such to be the hostile if slow-moving purpose of Western governments, and regard every demand for increased facilities for trade, or enlarged intercourse, as one step more in a path which means destruction to China. This fear is the larger cause of such opposition to missionary work as is found among the natives. Whatever may be



his ostensible calling, each foreigner is, in fact, a secret political agent. And each missionary is a government spy, disguised in clerical robes and calling.

Like people of all other races and nationalities, the Chinese regard their land as the finest upon the earth. As naturally they are convinced that all foreigners, whatever they may profess to the contrary, are really of this same opinion. And, from this conviction, it is but a short step to the other—the men of the West are bent upon stealing China. It is only upon this ground that they are able to explain, to their own satisfaction, the wandering propensities of foreigners. No Chinaman ever travels abroad for purposes of pleasure, curiosity or information. Hence why should foreigners do so? None of their own race go abroad for business who are able to escape starvation at home. Why, then, should Western men seek so far and seem so eager for trade, unless they had found in China a land immeasurably better and richer than their own, which they were determined to seize and hold?

There is a curious confirmation of the statement that this is the working theory upon which the Chinese explain the persistent presence of foreigners in their land, to be found in a memorial sent by the governor of Canton to the

Emperor in 1834, and quoted elsewhere upon another point. The governor said: "But the tea, the raw silk, the rhubarb of the Inner Land (China) are the sources by which the said nation's people (Great Britain) live and maintain life." . . . "Besides, all the merchants of the said nation dare dangers, crossing the seas myriads of miles, to come from far. Their hopes rest wholly in the attainment of gain by buying and selling." And in an order sent at the same time to the British Commissioner, through Chinese merchants, the governor said: "With regard to the foreign factory of the company, without the walls of the city, it is a place of temporary residence for foreigners coming to Canton to trade; they are permitted only to eat, sleep, buy, and sell in the factory. They are not allowed to go out to ramble about." Thus early did the Chinese show their suspicion, contempt, and fear of foreigners, and their interpretation of the motives and purposes which took them to the Celestial Empire.

As pointed out elsewhere, the conduct of such Europeans as visited China in early days furnished ample ground for the belief that they intended to take possession of the country. The Dutch introduced themselves to the Chinese in A.D. 1622 by means of a fleet of seventeen men-

of-war, and proceeded to attack Macao, where the Spaniards had already established themselves by force of arms. Being repulsed in this attack, they took possession of the Pescadore Islands, also Chinese territory, where they forced the native occupants with brutal severity to build them fortifications. At different times thereafter they made descents upon Amoy, the island of Formosa, and other points along the coast, but eventually abandoned or were beaten away from them all, and gave up their designs of obtaining "a foothold for trade" in China.

The Portuguese, by similar violence, established themselves at Ningpo as early as A.D. 1525. Their inhuman treatment of the natives brought a tardy vengeance upon them, and in A.D. 1545 they were driven out of that city with a loss of eight hundred lives; thirty-five foreign and two native vessels. They, too, attacked and held other points for a time, but afterward abandoned them, finally seizing Macao, which they still continue to hold.

Entirely aside from the inevitable feeling of outrage and humiliation aroused in the Chinese by the capture of Macao, and the permanent retention of that peninsula, by a combination of fraud and force, the government of Portugal has made it a constant source of annoyance and

serious trouble to the imperial authorities. For many years it was the centre and base of supply of the infamous coolie traffic. When that form of human slavery was at last stamped out of existence in 1874, its value as a source of revenue to Portugal was gone. It had had no trade whatever since Canton and Hong Kong, its near neighbors, were opened to foreign commerce in 1842. After repeated efforts, made by both Portugal and Spain, to reopen the coolie trade, the former seeking revenue from the business, and the latter needing slaves for the Cuban sugar plantations, the attempt was abandoned, and the Portuguese authorities opened Macao as a gambling resort. The right to establish tables for playing "fan tan," a game of chance forbidden in China, was farmed out, and the King of Portugal derives a small but welcome annual sum from this dilapidated and malodorous Monte Carlo upon the coast of southern China. It is the resort of Chinese desperadoes of every class, and, in a small way, a base of smuggling operations.

At the close of the "Opium War" in 1842, the government of Great Britain exacted from China, among other penalties, the cession of the island of Hong Kong. It was created into the colony of Victoria, and has remained continu-

attacked by a mob. In the battle which ensued, seventeen Chinamen were killed and twenty-six wounded. But the temper of the people was so excited and hostile, that proceedings for the French occupancy of the area were temporarily abandoned.

The next step in the progress of the Consul-General was in the nature of a demand for compensation for the riot, and that he be put into quiet possession of the conceded ground. In December, 1898, he proposed, in a great spirit of conciliation, that, in lieu of the pecuniary compensation previously demanded, an additional concession of land be made to France. He asked for the entire river frontage of the Chinese city of Shanghai. Upon this is a fine granite wharf, newly built, and extensive stores and warehouses equal to those found in any American seaport, all in excellent order, lighted by electricity, and doing an enormous business. If all this property, together with another large block of land upon the other side of the Chinese city, were surrendered, in place of pecuniary compensation for the riot, and the temple and burial-ground were added to the concession, the honor of France would be satisfied, and there would be no more trouble.

Another scheme in connection with these foreign areas at the open ports has been more than

people. And here again, to the inevitable humiliation and shame felt by the Chinese at the loss of territory, was added rage, all the more bitter because impotent, that the soil of the empire was being used as standing ground from which to work the ruin of the race.

The British trade returns for Hong Kong for the year 1897 show an estimated population of about 247,000, more than ninety per cent. of which is Chinese, and a total value of commerce amounting to two hundred and fifty million dollars. But these last figures would, without explanation, entirely mislead the average reader. The colony is solely a point of collection, transshipment, and distribution. It produces nothing for export, and buys only for local consumption. Silk, tea, matting and other native exports are brought to Hong Kong from near-by Chinese points, and there shipped in large seagoing vessels to all parts of the world. In a similar way, cotton goods, metals, flour, opium, kerosene, and other foreign merchandise reach Hong Kong in deep-sea craft, and are distributed in junks, river and coasting steamers, to different parts of China. The trade statistics show merely the total value of Chinese and foreign merchandise which passed through Hong Kong in 1897.

What the island became at the outset of its

ownership by the British it has since remained—a vast smuggling centre. After the enforced legalization of the opium traffic in 1860, it was more profitable to smuggle the drug than to pay the very low import duty. And to a large extent the demand from points near Hong Kong has continued to be supplied with opium upon which no tax has been paid. Efforts made by the Chinese authorities to protect the revenue have met with no very hearty assistance at the hands of the colonial officials. In Hong Kong, and, theoretically, for local consumption only, the right to refine and sell opium is farmed out by the British authorities, at a rent of \$15,500 per month. The owner of this monopoly does an average monthly business of \$40,000. Thus he pays a tax to the British Colonial Government of more than thirty-eight per cent. of his gross business. Lord Charles Beresford, in comment upon this state of facts, says: "The opium farmer is known to be the largest smuggler of opium into the country. If he did not smuggle he could not afford to pay the large rent demanded by the British Government." He mildly censures the Hong Kong authorities for thus, indirectly, encouraging an illegitimate traffic with a neighboring and friendly Power, and adds that such a course is "in direct oppo-

sition to the sentiments and traditions of the laws of the British Empire." He does not inform his curious readers at what point of time, in the history of Great Britain, the smuggling of opium into China became opposed to any traditions or sentiments of the English people, or rather of the British Government.

The masses of the Chinese people apparently look with less keen disfavor upon any threatened encroachments of Russia than upon the actual or threatened aggressions of other European Powers. There are a variety of reasons for this peculiar difference in sentiment. Perhaps the most important of these is the fact that hitherto the Russian hand has not been stretched out to grasp any portion of strictly Chinese territory. Port Arthur is not in China, but in Manchuria. And any questions concerning Manchuria do not touch the people of the empire closely. They concern the reigning family rather than the Chinese. And the average Chinaman will regard with a fair amount of complacency any disposition which the Emperor may be coerced, or see fit to make, of what is his own family possession. Then the Russians have been neighbors of the Chinese upon the north and northwest for a lengthy period of time. There are many points of close similarity between the



people of the two races. They have long-established trade relations. They know and understand each other better. Such of the Russians as come into direct contact with the commoner classes of Chinese are Asiatics rather than Europeans. And many of the educated Chinese, including some high officials, have been known to trace out and claim a relationship of blood between the ancestors of the present Czar and the ancient emperors of China.

In addition to all this, and at least in cases where Orientals are to be dealt with, the Russian diplomatist is probably the best in the world. He suits his means more carefully, and with greater tact and discretion, to those with whom he has to deal, as well as to the end to be attained. The brutal aggressiveness and self-assertion of the British is peculiarly offensive to the Chinese statesman. He does not choose to have a man-of-war frequently thrust into his face nor to see daily demands formulated and placed before him. The Russian seldom demands and never threatens. He cajoles, persuades, compromises, appears to yield, does yield for the moment, but eventually, and almost invariably, conquers the Oriental in his own game. It can hardly be doubted that, in case the officials and people were forced into choice of some European government into

whose hands they must fall, they would select Russia.

China and Japan are, of old, rivals and enemies. Corea, Formosa, and the Liu Chiu Islands have, first and last, been the occasion of much dispute and many battles between them. Japan borrowed much from her older and wiser neighbor in language, religion, literature, art, products of the soil, and processes of manufacture. And, as is usual in such cases, she despised the nation from whom she received so much. China looked down upon the Japanese, at times with complacent patronage, more frequently with exasperated contempt and anger, because they were so small a nation, yet lacked in reverence, and were so hard to whip. But, under it all, there was a certain feeling of kinship. They were of different races, but both Oriental. And this sentiment only served to intensify and deepen the hatred felt by China, in more recent days, toward Japan for casting aside ancient traditions and customs, and indulging in a mad rush for anything and everything that was modern and Western. To Chinese eyes it was a foolish, and almost insulting, repudiation of all that was sacred and most desirable, and an apish imitation of the barbarous customs and ways of the despised and feared men of the West.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE PARTITION OF CHINA.

NOT to go back into the times of Yao and Shun and misty tradition, China has been governed by two foreign dynasties, during the four thousand years of its more accurate history. There have been twenty-six different reigning families, of which twenty-four were Chinese. Of the two exceptions, the first was Mongol, and it governed the empire for a period of eighty-eight years, from A.D. 1280 to A.D. 1368. And the second was the present Manchu dynasty, which has been in power since A.D. 1643.

Those two Mongol warriors, famous in history, Genghis Khan, and his grandson Kublai Khan, who swept over Asia, devastated parts of Europe, and frightened all Christendom—these two men were the founders of the Mongol dynasty in China. Some of the northern tier of provinces had previously been under Tartar domination for a considerable period of time, but no large

portion of the empire had been subjected to non-Chinese rule.

The first of these men was pre-eminently a fighter, and did little to consolidate his authority over any region conquered by his arms. But some of his successors were humane and wise rulers. Of one of them, a Chinese contemporary writer says: "He was distinguished by a rare disinterestedness. . . . Wise and calculating in his plans, he did little of which he had any reason to repent." Kublai Khan caused the famous Grand Canal, and other works of great public utility, to be constructed, and won the good opinion of his Chinese subjects by the moderation and justice of his rule, and, especially, by his refusal to disturb existing arrangements for the conduct of public affairs. And it is worthy of notice, as bearing upon the subject of this chapter, that just so soon as the Mongol rulers abandoned the ancient Chinese civil service rules, and appointed men to office without regard to their literary qualifications, or filled positions with Mongol favorites, the doom of their rule was sounded. The natives of the empire cared comparatively little by whom the empty titular honor of sovereign was held. But they were determined that the actual government of China should remain in the hands of Chinese.

The Manchu dynasty has furnished several wise, energetic, and just monarchs. During their reigns, there was much vigor in the administration of affairs, and but little favoritism and intrigue. A far better authority than the writer of these pages, speaking fifty years ago, said: "The Manchu sway has well developed the industry and resources of the country, of which the population, loyalty, and content of the people are the best evidences." Beyond a question, the secret of the success and long-continued rule of the present Imperial Family is to be found in their scrupulous adherence to the Chinese system and practice of government. The Manchus have succeeded, and remained in nominal authority, simply because they have allowed the Chinese to rule themselves.

Much complaint is made of a species of narcotism, exhibited in the more recent rulers of this dynasty, and characterized by lack of energy and lax administration, listlessness, indifference, and general failure of virility. None complain more loudly than the Power which volunteered, indeed forced its aid, in bringing about this condition of impoverishment, debauchery, and consequent decay of vitality. And what greater efficiency of control could be expected, when a large

percentage, rising above fifty, of the immediate male members of the Imperial blood, are victims of the opium habit? What better could be expected, when the official and educated classes are honeycombed with the same vice, a vice synonymous with incompetency and dishonesty?

The best Chinese authorities place the origin of the race in the great valley of the Yangtze River, and near the present centre of the "Eighteen Provinces." They are not the aboriginal inhabitants of that portion of Asia, at least so far as certain areas within the empire are concerned. Remnants of an earlier race or tribe still exist, and bear the same relation to the Chinese that the North American Indian sustains to the citizens of the United States. The Chinese probably originated in the region named, and, growing rapidly in numbers, spread throughout the country which they now occupy, crowding out, or submerging, weaker specimens of the human stock. There is not a syllable to be found, either in their history or earliest traditions, which indicates that they were, originally, migrants from any other part of the earth. Nor do the books of record of other branches of the family of man furnish a suggestion that the Chinese race had its birthplace elsewhere. In the days when

racess were born, they came into existence where they now are, and there they have remained, continuously, since.

There is no foundation for a theory that the Chinese is a compound, or mixed race, the product obtained by mingling several different strains of blood. Neither their history nor tradition indicates anything of the sort. If such a process has taken place, of which the Chinaman is the result, it must have occurred in the very earliest ages of humanity. For, not only do their records fail to show any evidence of it, but their history and customs, the latter unchanged for nearly forty centuries, furnish proof that active precautions were taken against it.

The modern practice of the Chinese in this regard is striking, and may be relied upon as being in line with the traditional and uniform policy of the race. There are no indications of intermarriage between the Mongols and the natives during the years when the former governed China. The Manchus have ruled the empire for rather more than three hundred and fifty years. A large Manchu population is found in and near Peking, and in other portions of the land. These have lost their original home, language, customs, and habits, having, in all these regards, been absorbed by the Chinese, the stronger, more highly

civilized race. Yet such a relation between the two as intermarriage, or interconnection, is quite unknown. Each marries within his own race, and there are no hybrid children.

The millions of Mohammedans found throughout Northern and Western China are the descendants of ancestors who removed thither from Persia and Turkestan centuries ago. They have become, to all appearance, Chinese in every regard, excepting their religion. They associate with the natives, live among them, have extensive business relations with them, but they never intermarry. The little village of Jews in the heart of the empire, where they have been since the dispersion of the Tribes, is losing in numbers by reason of too close intermarriage. But no relations of that nature have, even a single instance, been established between them and the surrounding Chinese.

It may appear to be a startling statement, but it is quite possible that, in all history, there has not been so great a total adulteration of Chinese blood as is now to be seen in those unfortunate illegitimate Eurasians—children of American or European fathers and native mothers—who can be counted by the thousands in the ports of China where foreigners reside. Be this as it may, it is certain that no admixture of alien blood, suffi-



cient to produce any perceptible effect upon the race, has ever occurred. The Chinese is a pure, original type of human kind. As such they are unique and unexampled, both as regards the long stretch of their history and the greatness of their numbers. No more interesting subject can be found for the student of ethnology.

Latterly much has been written of the Chinese as an accidental combination of alien and diverse tribes, clans, and races, without a common identity, or any uniformity of traits and characteristics. Nothing could be further from the truth. And all such statements are little better than the creation of imaginary facts, with which to confirm some preconceived theory.

The Chinese are a marked race, absolute in their uniformity and identity of character. No matter how disguised by dress, language, or association, individual specimens can be readily picked out, even by the inexpert, no matter to what corner of the earth they may have roamed. And, excepting, possibly, by slight and superficial peculiarities, an expert in knowledge of the race will be unable to determine from what portion of the empire any Chinaman may have come. There are no tribal marks, because there are no tribes. And there are no clans, within the broad meaning commonly given to that word. As explained

elsewhere, small combinations of men, either bearing the same name, or residents of the same locality, are frequently formed, temporarily, for the accomplishment of some specified purpose. That purpose accomplished or defeated, the combination ends, and the so-called "clan" exists no longer.

Much is made by those who hope or fear to see, in this imaginary lack of racial unity, a ready excuse for the disintegration of the empire—much is made by such of the frequently recurring feuds and quarrels between inhabitants of neighboring villages or districts, over the possession of a well, a bit of land, or some other trivial matter. But these disputes serve to prove the identity, not the diversity, of those concerned in them. And these Chinese neighborhood squabbles must not be taken too seriously. They are the natural outgrowth of great poverty, and of pettiness and irascibility of temper. Every breeze is not a cyclone. And only a morbidly nervous person can mistake the results of the sudden down-sitting of a stout man for an earthquake. These quarrels shake a neighborhood or district at times, but they prove nothing, indicate nothing, beyond local bad temper. They do not mark out lines of cleavage of the empire any more than a brilliant writer upon things Chinese

defines a racial peculiarity, when he mentions the capacity of the natives "to go to sleep across three wheelbarrows, with heads downward like a spider, their mouths wide open, and a fly inside."

Much undue importance is also given to local differences of dialect among the Chinese. These do not affect the construction, or idiom, of the language in any degree, but merely the pronunciation. Throughout four-fifths of the empire, these provincialisms of speech or sound, as they may be called, are not greater than those to be found in every European country. They are less serious than those met with in England, and are in no sense a hindrance to communication.

The excepted one-fifth consists of a strip of seaboard territory which extends from a point a little to the north of Shanghai, down to the southern boundary line. Measured back from the coast, it varies in depth from fifty to one hundred and fifty miles. Within this area, dialectic differences are great, of frequent occurrence, and as clean cut in their outline as the sharpest line of distinction between a cloud and the clear sky. Pronunciations do not shade imperceptibly from one into another, but a radical change occurs at once. Even here, the local differences of speech are not enormously greater than those which may,

be found elsewhere. It is practically impossible for many of the less educated Yorkshiremen to carry on an intelligent conversation with a cockney, or with a resident of the south of England, excepting by means of an interpreter. Yet no one has suggested that a process of disintegration was going on there, or that Yorkshire might easily drop away from the remainder of the island.

The inhabitants of this region of strongly marked dialects are unequivocally and most intensely Chinese in every characteristic. And there are no peculiarities of speech there or elsewhere in China but would disappear within two or three generations, with cheap and easy means of communication with those beyond them. One simply sees in China what he finds everywhere else. In regions remote, or shut out from main lines of travel, or inhabited by those who have not, for any reason, come into contact and acquaintance with those of other parts, localisms of every sort, of language, of dress, of customs and ways, are inevitable. But these are not proofs of any radical differences or peculiarities. They indicate nothing more than the need of that valuable friction which comes with varied and frequent intercourse. And they easily disappear under changed conditions.

The geography of China furnishes no natural lines of demarcation between different portions of the empire. Like the United States, it is symmetrically shaped, compact, well rounded, and intended to be the home of one nation for all time. The centres of its wealth, industries, and population are substantially identical with each other, and with the centre of its area. One great river, fed from the snows of the Himalaya Mountains, pours a wonderful flood through the heart of the empire, furnishing more than two thousand miles of waterway, and, with its tributaries, serves as the great artery of traffic and communication. By means of it, huge ocean-going steamships may load their cargoes eight hundred miles inland, and discharge them at the docks in New York or London.

Little territory of value lies adjacent to China, either to tempt her ambition or to serve as a base of attack by others upon her. Upon the west are limitless deserts of sand; upon the north are the scarcely less inhospitable steppes of Mongolia. To the southwest, the impassable Himalayas at once shut her in and protect her against all approach, while to the south the horrible jungles and fever-loaded swamps of Burmah and Siam furnish a stronger barrier and defence than any number of armed men. China can only be ap-

proached by way of the sea. And one-half the circumference of the earth has, until recently, stretched between the empire and any recognized military power.

The hill and mountain ranges, by which the surface of the country is much broken, serve less as walls of division than as guides, or chutes, by means of which the great bulk of commerce and intercourse is directed into the bosom of the empire, the valley of the Yangtze River. Placed as they are, they are ribs of strength. They reinforce and stiffen the natural cohesion of the race and nation.

It must not be supposed, from what has been said, that little or no intercommunication takes place between the different, and even most remote, parts of the empire. Upon the contrary, all China is one great hive of commerce. Every part is reached from every other part. It is no more true in France that all commodities find their way to Paris than in China that the products of every district are carried to Peking. The whole business is done under the most antiquated, cumbersome, and expensive methods, and with an enormous waste of time. But it is done. The inns, everywhere, are full of business travellers. The rivers and canals are crowded with cargo-carrying craft of every description, and bound in

every direction. The roads and mountain-passes are clamorous with the shouts and calls of drivers of camels, drivers of horses, mules and donkeys, and with porters of every age and both sexes, all loaded to the extreme limit of endurance with every namable class or description of goods, bound for a market. There are native banks of exchange in every city of size, by means of which money may be safely remitted to any part of China, however remote. In addition to the government service of couriers, there are postal and express companies which transmit letters and parcels everywhere. As time is never an object of importance with the Chinese, only a lack of promptness will be guaranteed, but of safety there is good assurance. And the responsibility of such companies is more invariably enforced than in some Western lands.

As the final government examinations are held at Peking, and as the civil service rules forbid the appointment of any official to duty in his native province, there is a large and constant amount of, what may be called, official travel. And there is a very considerable stirring up and kneading of communities continually going on everywhere within the empire, as an effect of these two regulations. Northern men fill the southern offices, and southern men the northern. Eastern men

carry their ideas into Western posts of duty, and Western men make use of theirs in the East. And students, prospective prime ministers, are found upon all the highways, at nearly all times, carrying their local views and theories to the capital, and taking back the latest and most approved metropolitan fashion of dress, thought, or speech, to their native villages. While these processes may not result in much transfusion of modern knowledge, or Western forms of civilization, into the native body, they can hardly fail to make it uniformly and evenly Chinese.

Is not the Chinaman exactly the type of humanity which such conditions as those specified might be expected to produce? An original race, unmodified and unstrengthened during thousands of years, by the introduction of any other strains of blood, segregated from all of the growing portion of humanity during the later centuries, and left to act and react upon itself! Given such a history, and the results might safely be anticipated. The native vigor and intellectuality of the race—shown in a thousand facts in their history—are not essentially impaired, but have been retained, with the purity of their blood. But with these are found, what might be looked for, great intensity and fixedness of every peculiar trait and characteristic; great conceit and pride



of race; a lack of perspective and of true discrimination, showing itself in an enormous range of unimportant details, in the minor affairs of life, filling up the time and wasting the energies; indifferent and contemptuous regard for the rest of humanity; and entire satisfaction with their own ideas, forms, and theories.

The intense personality and fixedness of type are the natural results of long-continued inbreeding. The Chinese are unlike any other race, because the blood of no other flows in their veins. They are lacking in the faculty of true discrimination, because they have long been deprived of all opportunity to compare and contrast themselves with equals or superiors. They are unready to learn, because for centuries they have been in contact with none who could teach them. They possess all the characteristics of a well-bred, but too closely bred, race. With great capacities, they have been shut in upon themselves. Hence, such sharp contrasts as are found among the Chinese. Coupled, in the same person, with fine mental ability, is the intense vanity of utter ignorance. The man has been made blind by long-continued gazing upon himself. He is a bundle of over-developed, wrongly developed, and undeveloped faculties. But he is neither weak nor decadent.

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Such as he is, he is the problem of the present age. This Oriental Rip Van Winkle, at once old and young, has been roused from his sleep, dragged, unconsenting, from his seclusion, and made to face a strange, new world. He stands confronting it, an immense, compact race, a race so completely unified, that any individual of it may be taken as a fair specimen of four hundred millions. The experiences of his few waking days—for sixty years are but a few days in the age of a race—have been decidedly unpleasant, and, as reckoned by him, promise little for the future. Hence he stands, drawn within himself, unyielding and unfriendly.

And the world has not decided what to do with him. Leaving other propositions out of sight, there are those who advise that China be cut up, dismembered, and divided among certain European Powers, the authors of the suggestion to receive, of course, a liberal share in the division.

It is hardly necessary to comment, in any serious way, upon the arguments advanced in favor of such a line of action. However plausible they may appear at first glance, they are false and unsound, containing not enough of the substance of reason to disguise, or conceal, the real motive which underlies them all. Put strongly,

that motive is simply plunder. Stated in the most charitable language obtainable, it is still altogether selfish. "What is best for China" is not the question, practically at issue, with any of the advocates of partition, but rather "What will be the best for us in China." The most Pharisaical of all the European governments is anxious to see a well-organized, but *small*, army maintained by the Chinese Government. Why? In order that it may serve as an efficient police force for the protection of British merchants and British trade. The same government is, professedly, hostile to the dismemberment theory, just at present. Why? Because it is well aware that the volume of its trade, in an undivided China, is greater than it would be in China partitioned, even including the commerce which it could control in the large area which it would appropriate in the event of partition. And, while professedly opposed to the policy of division, it has taken good care to outline the richest part of the empire, and to warn other Powers away from it, as the exclusive property of Great Britain, in case such a policy prevails.

Thus it is, that the entire question of the continued existence of the Chinese nation is to be decided, not in accordance with what will be best for it, but what will best satisfy the ambition,

greed of domination, and money lust of Great Britain, Russia, France, and Germany. The four great vultures roost there now, three of them upon the northeast coast, watching the victim and each other, by turns, while the fourth is ready and hungry for its prey, upon the southern frontier. The truth is, that China is the greatest find in all history, for the hunters after plunder. And while the world has advanced in many directions, in the point of international morality and chivalrous regard for the rights of the weak, it still remains disgracefully near where it stood in the days of the German barons, the Norse pirates, and the Jew-teeth-extracting robber Knights of England.

It is not intended to ignore or make light of the many just and serious complaints against the Chinese administration of affairs. The occasions which give rise to them are of constant recurrence, and the point has been reached where they cannot longer be endured. No nation may, wisely, be allowed to play fast and loose with its most solemn obligations, or to trifle with the lives and property of aliens who are within its territory under pledges of protection. It makes little practical difference whether the government, in its own personality, is the wrongdoer, or whether, by laxity and failure of justice, it permits wrong-

doing. The responsibility is the same. And China must be held to a strict account for every wrong done or permitted, every promise broken. But let it be kept in mind that this is due to China, not less than from her.

Admitting, however, all that is claimed in regard to acute conditions of disorder in the empire; the inefficiency and corruption of officials; the insecurity of life and property; and the apparent impossibility of securing any valuable reforms under existing conditions, it still remains true that the dismemberment of China is not only unjustifiable, in view of all the facts, but is, not more for the Chinese than for the foreign Powers concerned, an unwise and unsafe remedy. Simpler, more natural, and far less drastic measures lie close at hand and plainly in sight. There can be no doubt of their full efficacy, if once fairly tried.

Suppose, for example, that the six great Powers most in evidence in Chinese affairs—the four already named, with the addition of the United States and Japan—suppose that these Powers agree upon a just, generous, and firm policy or line of action toward China, and make an honest trial of it for a term of years. They will then be in position to determine whether moderation and fair treatment are appreciated by, or wasted

upon, the Chinese. No such policy has been tested in the past. There have been sporadic cases of joint action. But these have been chiefly remarkable by a nominal concert and a practical false play. And it is a fact not sufficiently well known, and to which sufficient weight is not given, that, since 1860, no demand, unitedly made and moderately pressed by the great Powers named, has failed of success.

For forty years the Chinese Government has been pulled this way and crowded that. It has been bullied, threatened, fawned upon, and caajoled by turns. Privileges and concessions demanded by one European Power have been openly or secretly opposed by another. If eventually granted, under threat or other pressure, then an equivalent, or compensation of some sort, must be provided for others. To yield to one has resulted in securing the enmity of his rival. Secret, unasked, and questionable advice has been bestowed upon the heads of the ministers of the Foreign Office until they were dazed and stupefied. Is it to be wondered at if, in such a pressure of conflicting interests and rival demands, in such an unseemly pushing and crowding from and toward every direction, the Chinese authorities, dreading to do this, and afraid to do that, not knowing what to do, should end in doing

nothing? Is it strange if, in their shrewdness and timidity, they have sought to play off one Power against another, to allow these rival forces to counterbalance themselves? Where and when in all this ruck and scramble, especially of the last twenty years, has China had either fair play or a sufficient opportunity to justify herself before the world?

Ample evidence has already been given in these pages to prove that, however unfavorable the description, given in the preceding paragraph, of European policy in China may appear, it is more than sustained by the facts. Two or three quotations, taken exclusively from British authorities, may fitly be added here as cumulative testimony.

Lord Charles Beresford, in "The Break Up of China," reports the Chinese officials at Tientsin as follows: "They said that Russia insisted on China giving concessions which she was helpless to refuse, and that Great Britain immediately demanded why such concessions were given, and either made China pay heavily or give an equivalent, which China was equally helpless to refuse." As an unintentional illustration of this complaint, he says, speaking of certain events at Chefoo: "The Chinese were induced to sell the foreshore (which belonged to them) to a Russian Com-

pany. Instead of arguing out the point in a friendly manner with the Russian Government, the British Government insisted on the Chinese paying 30,000 taels (over \$20,000) for granting a concession, which, owing to their weakness, they were powerless to refuse." That is to say, blackmail, to the amount of more than \$20,000, was levied by Great Britain upon China, because the latter had disposed of a piece of its own property as it saw fit and had the right to do!

In another part of his volume, Lord Charles Beresford reports a conversation which he had with the Chinese Governor, and General, Yuan Shih Kai, whom he describes as "most energetic and intelligent, and a well-informed and well-educated man." Lord Charles asked the General if he could make any suggestion that would be for the benefit of China, and to which European countries would assent. He says: "The General answered that no proposal that the Chinese could make would receive the consent of the European Powers; that a Chinese would naturally make a proposition for the maintenance of the empire, while European countries showed by their actions that they wished to split up the empire and divide it among themselves." It is worthy of remark that this conversation took



place nearly two years before the Boxer movement.

Mr. Archibald R. Colquhoun, a distinguished British writer upon Asiatic questions, in a work entitled "Overland to China," thus describes the diplomatic situation at Peking a few years ago: "The old-fashioned, chronic questions of transit and audience gave way to fierce threats and demands for territory and special concessions. The French and Russian ministers alternated their daily visits to the Tsung li Yamen, and bullied, stormed, and threatened, until the Chinese were completely cowed."

And Mr. Harold E. Gorst, in his volume on China, furnishes the following interesting statement of facts. It was necessary that the Chinese Government should secure funds with which to pay the balance of the Japanese war indemnity. "The British Government was most anxious to issue the loan on generous and acceptable terms. But Russia stepped in directly the negotiations neared completion, and peremptorily forbade China to borrow the money. The Chinese Minister in London was instructed to explain (to the British authorities) that the Chinese Government had been warned by Russia that their acceptance of a loan, guaranteed by Great Britain, would entail an interruption in the friendly rela-

tions existing between the two empires." This was Russia's innings. But now John Bull takes his turn at the bat. Mr. Gorst continues: "In compliance with instructions from Downing Street (the British Foreign Office), the unfortunate Chinese were warned that if they resorted to the expedient of obtaining a loan from European financiers, the friendly relations between the two countries would be seriously imperilled, were British banks excluded from sharing in the transaction. The upshot of these threats and counter threats, by which the unhappy Tsung li Yamen was placed between cross-fires, was the Anglo-German loan of £16,000,000."

It ought to be added that China needed this money to complete the payment of indemnity, and thus to secure the evacuation of Wei Hai Wei, which was held as security, and in the possession of Japanese troops. When the money, borrowed as indicated above, was paid to Japan, and her troops moved out, Great Britain quietly moved in and took possession, which she still holds. It is to be hoped that this exalted type of statecraft is peculiar and limited to Europe. There have been exhibitions of it in other Oriental capitals than Peking. A European Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary (all with capital letters) once appeared at the Japanese

Foreign Office, asked to see the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and informed that official that he should remain in his presence until a certain firm, composed of his compatriots, were granted the contract to supply a new government building with shovels, tongs, pokers, and fire-grates.

The truth is—and it ought to be told—that the European Powers have only themselves to thank, or blame, for nine-tenths of all the difficulties which have arisen within the Chinese Empire. Governmental policies which are utterly without excuse, and scandalous diplomacy, are at the root of all the troubles. There is no serious difficulty in handling the Chinese question, if only it may be handled decently. Anything which ought, in the judgment of the great Western Powers, to be done by the Imperial authorities will be done, if common cause is made by the former, and the point firmly and patiently pressed. But the meekest and most timid animal known to science will struggle and strike out when it is led to believe that its life is sought. The policies of the past in China have brought the four hundred millions of the race into a desperate, enraged struggle for national existence. And the present crisis is the result. The scheme of dismemberment is, in no sense, the outgrowth of Chinese

official incompetence, corruption, or troubles of any sort between China and the Western world. But it is the natural sequence, the final and foul issue, of years of strife and bickering between the European Powers for political and commercial supremacy within the empire. There are no arguments to justify it, save such as are available to the highwayman and pirate.

It is, of course, understood that great political organizations and governments, as such, are not charitable or philanthropic in their purposes. Their legitimate object is to conserve and promote the interests of the people within their charge. And it is to be expected that all questions, whether domestic or international, will be considered by them from this natural standpoint. Hence, a certain amount of what may be called decent selfishness is to be expected in all their lines of policy and action. But, at the same time, they are bound to show some regard for the common rights of humanity, and to respect the just claims and interests of others. It is good policy to do so. And the questions of partition, and of the general attitude of foreign powers toward China, are not argued or considered here upon any elevated plane of morals or religion, but upon the lower general standing ground of common-sense and sound public policy. Judged and de-

cided by such rules and measures, the result must be strong condemnation, both of past European policies in China and of the proposed dismemberment.

If, at the establishment of diplomatic relations with the empire forty years ago, the great Powers then interested had agreed in the adoption of the policy which has, in the main, been consistently pursued by the United States; if Great Britain had consented to the suppression of the iniquitous opium traffic; if all Western governments had given assurance to the Chinese authorities, by acts as well as words, that no unjust demands or aggressions would be indulged in; that the integrity of the nation was not, and would not be, threatened; but that, on the other hand, all pledges and promises given by China must be kept in good faith, and a sound commercial and friendly intercourse must be permitted and encouraged—if such a line of policy had been adopted and followed out, conjointly and consistently, by all the great Powers, the results would have been, beyond question, immeasurably better for the entire world.

None who have studied the Chinese character and the history of the past forty years can fail to recognize this. There would have been no occasion to fear the temper or strength of a re-

organized and developed China. Before she reached her new strength, she would have realized that she had no wrongs to avenge. Now she knows that she has, and hence, with some, a policy of inhumanity and aggression may best be followed by another of suppression and strangulation. Under such a just and reasonable course of action, the empire would have taken on a new and modern dress, would have been developed and reconstructed as rapidly as would have been wise or prudent, in view of the naturally conservative tendencies of the people. The anti-foreign feeling would have died of starvation, having nothing to feed upon. And commerce, that final good of modern Western life, would have grown far beyond its present limits, since it would have been unvexed and unhampered by restrictions inspired by hatred and fear. There would have been more profit in an honest, peaceable policy.

True, much patience and much pressure would have been called into exercise at times. But those are not expensive forces, when compared with the equipment, transportation, and massing of armies, the destruction of cities, and the hideous massacre of men, helpless women, and little children. And those forces, combined with firmness and persistence, would have done the work. No war would have been necessary. No power other

or stronger than what may be called persuasive coercion would have been demanded.

If there are no arguments in favor of the dismemberment of China which are sound, there are many against it which are unanswerable. Some of them have been brought out in the earlier pages of this chapter. These may be summarized, and others added, here.

The empire is too compact, too homogeneous and thoroughly unified for successful dismemberment. It is too large, and far too indigestible, to be swallowed whole. There are fewer natural lines of division among the Chinese race than are to be found in the toughest granite rock. A sufficient amount of force may shatter it into irregular, nondescript fragments, but it contains no lines of cleavage, and hence cannot be divided. China may be broken, it cannot be partitioned. All the imaginary lines which cupidity, lust for political domination, or other motive can suggest, may be stretched through the air and across the empire, and different names may be given to the areas marked out by these lines of political cobweb, with a spider in the centre of each, but the whole country will continue a practically undivided China. How long these spiders, British, Russian, German, and French, may be allowed to gorge and bloat themselves upon Chinese flies

and mosquitoes; how soon they will fall upon and devour each other; or how soon they may be swept away by some Chinese patriotic broom, are, of course, questions of a different sort.

For the temporary and nominal partition of China is one thing, and the real subjugation, absorption, and assimilation of the various portions, by the Powers placed in control of them, is another and very serious business. Thus far no solvent has been found for the Chinaman. And, unless Christianity will do the work, he must remain the refractory ore in the mine of humanity. He has an unlimited power of absorption and improvement, but retains, through all such processes, his own type and his own individuality. He adopts most Western ways and ideas with a good degree of readiness, but he shapes them to himself, rather than being shaped by them. At once, when accepted and put into use by him, they, so to speak, take on his color, and assume almost an Oriental nativity. The Chinaman is a Chinaman everywhere and under all conditions. Quiet, good-natured, and docile as he is, his personality is so intense, and his power of silent and often undiscovered resistance so great, that what he chooses to take on becomes a part of himself, while unwelcome influences permanently fail of effect.



All of which, taken in connection with his strong pride of race, great love of his home and country *as it is*, and contemptuous dislike of those who would become his rulers, make of him a most unpromising subject for experiment, with a view to his subjection to any Western government. The Chinese mind is not adjusted to any other form of control than that with which it has been familiar for many centuries, and of which it is actively a part. It will not readily become so. For the parental idea lies at the root of the system, and the Chinaman is little likely to accept any red-haired, large-nosed, blue-eyed, grotesque monstrosity of the human being (as he regards it) as the parental head of his race, and the Son of Heaven. This may seem a purely sentimental idea, but it will be found to be both active and dangerous.

The successes of Western Powers in governing Oriental races have not been sufficiently pronounced to justify an attempt upon the most difficult and refractory of them all. After one hundred years of undisputed control, Great Britain still holds India by means of an expensive military cordon. But the people are still natives in every sense of that word. And while that empire has been a veritable gold mine for British merchants; and while an army of a

quarter of a million of men, aided by a vast array of civilian officials, have kept the country in subjection, given a fair measure of good government, and worked out numerous and valuable public improvements, it has yet to be demonstrated that the native Indian takes any active interest in all these things; that he recognizes himself as really a part of them; that he has any other feeling toward the Empress, who rules him from London, than bitter, though concealed, hate; and that the armed force which holds him could, after these four centuries, be safely withdrawn, and he be left to a *free* enjoyment of those blessings of Western civilization which have been taught and forced into him for so long a period of time. It also remains to be demonstrated that the native Indian would not, in the same centuries, have done more and better for himself if allowed, under moderate control and guidance, freedom of action and personal responsibility for the results. The Japanese have certainly done enormously better for themselves under such conditions. And why, then, might not the native of India?

But the Chinaman is a very different man from the Hindoo. And what has been difficult in India will be impossible in China. He is the product of a far higher form of civilization, has a more

independent, sturdy, democratic spirit, knows better his own way, and fully means to have it. That he has, in the past, subjugated every race about him, excepting the Indian, from which he was shut off by the Himalayas, and the Japanese beyond sea, is sufficient proof of his superiority in the various directions of national strength. He is not in love with the European, does not recognize the superiority of the latter in many respects, and there is no reason whatever to expect that he could be easily brought to call him master. One thing he might do. He might take somewhat readily to the profession of arms, for he possesses all the natural qualities of a good soldier. He might submit to all the drill and study involved in the modern science of war until expert with the sword, and then, when in his judgment the time had come, thrust it into his instructor and oppressor.

The Chinese are abundantly able to govern themselves and to work out their own future. Why not allow them to do it? They possess all of the ability of the Japanese, with more steadfastness and conservatism. They adopt new ideas less readily, perhaps, but, once accepted, those ideas are more permanently employed and to better purpose. They might not shape all things in conformity with American or European notions

and manners. But who has decided that the notions and manners of the latter are, invariably and unequivocally, the best possible for every race and every condition? The entire history of the Chinese race demonstrates its ability, strength, and manliness. They will do for themselves, slowly perhaps, but surely and efficiently, whatever needs to be done, under kindly guidance, far better than under what they believe to be hostile control and dictation.

No possible good or really desirable end can be gained by the dismemberment of the Chinese Empire. Upon the contrary, a gross wrong against humanity would be perpetrated in the act, and not only China, but the whole civilized world would suffer in consequence of so foul a deed. More is at stake than the Celestial and his empire. The peace of Europe depends upon the integrity of China, and a new map of the latter will inevitably result in : new map of the former. As has been shown, the question of partition is the result of the strife and quarrel over commercial and political supremacy in the East, and is not at all the outcome of troubles caused by China. The only rôle played by her in the tragedy is that of victim.

If the mere discussion of Chinese affairs provokes such jealousy and excitement in European

courts; if Russia cannot occupy a square mile of land, or make a loan to China, or buy a few feet of foreshore at Chefoo, without an angry growl from Great Britain, a threat made and an equivalent demanded; if Germany must threaten France, and France must scowl over robberies perpetrated by the former upon unfortunate China, what would be the result, if these four great Powers came into close contact in remote Asia, as the result of the dismemberment of the Chinese Empire? The peace of Europe could not endure for a week.

This statement cannot seem exaggerated to any person who is even moderately familiar with the European, and especially the British, press. Read any newspaper, magazine, or book which deals with international questions, and the fact becomes at once apparent that Russia is the ever-present and ever-active bugbear to the entire British nation. Let the soldiers of the Czar take possession of a village containing only a dozen mud-walled hovels, in Mongolia or Manchuria, and a unanimous shriek goes up from the British press that the Russians are advancing on India. Let the Czar seek for an ice-free port upon the Pacific, and he is advancing upon India. India must be a veritable gold mine indeed to justify such hysterics from intelligent Englishmen,

whenever Russia makes an unimportant movement, at some point five thousand miles distant from the nearest point of the Indian frontier.

What would happen if these two great Powers, mad with mutual jealousy, hatred, and suspicion, should meet face to face upon a common boundary line in the Yangtze Valley? A bitter war, which would most likely punish each of them, and avenge China for wrongs suffered at their hands. But China herself would be the worst sufferer. The fairest part of the empire would be devastated, and millions of her unoffending people would be forced to suffer the horrors of war, famine, and pestilence.

## CHAPTER XII.

### REFORM IN CHINA.

**STRICTLY** speaking, the subject of this chapter is one with which foreign governments have nothing to do. The Chinese political system is a matter for the consideration and adjustment of the Chinese people alone. The purity or corruption of officials, the honest or iniquitous enforcement of law, the wisdom or unwisdom of any particular system of taxation, and all other questions which touch the complicated machinery of political organization and administration, are purely domestic in their character, and, rightfully, must be left to the decision of those directly concerned.

It is natural and easy, but dangerous, for outsiders to meddle in them. Doubtless, certain of the great Powers of Europe, from purely interested motives, would gladly revise, for the United States, the whole system of import taxation as legally defined and administered here, and would also correct our faults and vices in a variety of

other directions, and much to *their* advantage. Doubtless, China would undertake to remedy the discrimination against her people, which is to be found in our immigrant legislation. And, beyond a question, the statesmen of America have discovered a multitude of wrongs and abuses in the governmental systems of Europe, which latter they feel themselves quite competent to recast and reconstruct upon a pure and ideal basis. But the homely old rule which teaches each man to mind his own business is nowhere so important and imperative as in questions of this sort. The interests involved are so grave and far-reaching, and, at the same time, so complicated, intertangled, and obscure, that strangers may not safely meddle. They must be studied out, wrought out, and lived out, by the inhabitants themselves.

Only when the defects or abuses of any political system are of such grave character as to interfere with the rights, privileges, and immunities of aliens resident within the territory controlled by it, and to result in constant violations of treaty engagements—only under such conditions are foreign governments justified, or wise, in interference. And there is good ground for the belief that, even in such cases, the interference may best be confined to the correction of particular wrongs



and violations of obligation, leaving the government most concerned to correct the system under which they have been committed. Governments are but larger bundles of human nature. They will resist and resent outside pressure or advice, when, if left quietly to themselves, they will take the necessary steps to remove causes of complaint. A manifest determination to exact what is due will effect more than any quantity of unwelcome interference.

That wholesale and sweeping reforms are demanded in every branch of the Chinese administration, if the nation is to continue an independent existence, is manifest to every one who has any acquaintance with the country or its people. None recognize this fact more fully than the Chinese themselves. Just how far foreigners may wisely press or offer their advice or assistance, in bringing these to pass, is quite another question.

The chapter upon "The Chinese Army and Navy" has given the reader some faint idea of the hopeless inefficiency and rampant corruption which exist in that most important branch of the government service. Only the most superficial examination of any, or all, of the remaining departments is necessary to show an equal or greater decay in efficiency and growth in abuse. Appropriations are not appropriated, but pass

from the Treasury into the pockets of officials and their underlings. Orders and instructions are seldom executed in good faith, and are, not infrequently, quite ignored. Reports mean little or nothing in the way of exact information upon any existing state of facts. They may show what ought to be, they seldom show what is.

The finances of the empire—and they constitute the most sensitive and reliable barometer of honesty and good government in any nation—have long been in a chronic condition of disorder and scantiness. Yet the tax levy, while moderate in every direction, is ample, if honestly collected, honestly paid into the Treasury, and honestly and intelligently expended, to meet all the needs of the administration of affairs. The root of the trouble can be stated in a single sentence. While far more than the legal amount of tax is collected from the people, far less than that amount is paid into the Treasury, and of sums appropriated from the public funds, which have thus been subjected to one sweating process, only a small proportion reaches any legitimate destination. By way of example, the land tax is reasonable in rate and quite within the ability of the people to pay. Yet, legitimately collected and paid, it would yield a large and reliable annual revenue. An average of from three to five times the authorized

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amount is regularly collected, and less than the proper return is as regularly reported. Any number of instances might be cited in proof of this statement. In *The Real Chinaman* is given an interesting detail of the methods by which this extortion is accomplished, and the statement of a particular case, in which the inhabitants of a district, not remote from Peking, revolted against the payment of four and one-half times the legal rate, and, after varied experiences, effected a compromise with the local authorities, agreed to pay two and one-half times the proper sum annually for all future time, and erected a granite slab in the centre of their city, as permanent evidence of this adjustment of the difficulty.

It is, naturally, impossible to determine whether this form of official corruption—tampering with the government funds—is greater in the capital or the provinces. Some illustrations of what is done beneath the eye of the Emperor will show what it is there, and will lead to the conclusion that, if worse at points more remote from the centre of authority, little or nothing can be left for the legitimate expenses of the government. The Imperial household, being Manchu, use milk, which the Chinese never touch, as an article of food, and a supply is brought each day to the palace from outside the city. The native

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residents of Peking have a saying, as describing the universal peculation, that, when the Imperial milk wagon reaches the outer gate of the city, the official on duty there takes out a cup of milk and puts in a cup of water, at each gate and police station within the city, passed by the wagon, this process of extraction and substitution is repeated, with the result that, when the fluid eventually reaches the Imperial table, no trace of milk, even in color, can be detected. They are also somewhat fond of saying that the Emperor is the poorest man in all China.

At one time in its history, Peking possessed an elaborate and efficient system of sewage, not connected with residences or public buildings of any class, but intended solely to carry off the heavy rainfall. Some years ago, it became necessary to clean out a stretch of sewer, from one of the legations to the canal, a distance of about fifteen hundred feet. It was in perfect repair, but was silted full of earth. The work required was simple, and comprised digging down some four feet to the top of the sewer, removing the heavy granite slabs which capped it, shovelling out the dry earth from within, and replacing everything in proper shape. An application to the city authorities to have this work done was met with the reply that there were no funds available for

such purpose. The head of the legation most affected by this lack of proper drainage then decided to have the sewer cleaned at his own expense, and made a contract with a Chinese for the sum of six hundred Mexican dollars. But, at a later moment, he changed his determination, and brought influences and pressure to bear upon the Imperial authorities, until they at length did their duty. And thus done, this simple piece of shovelling cost the government somewhat more than fifty-five thousand Mexican dollars!

At about the same time, an order was made to open up and put into thorough repair a similar trunk sewer, running along a business street from the south to the north wall of the city. A liberal sum was appropriated for the expense of the work. The labor was performed in the following manner by the military police of Peking. Selecting a position over the sewer and directly in front of the largest shop or store upon the street, they proceeded to make a large excavation, throwing the dirt and refuse into a huge pile against the entrance to this establishment, and completely putting an end to its business. Complaints and remonstrances were in vain. They were obeying the commands of the Emperor, and what were mere merchants, that they should object or interfere! Eventually, a money payment

secured their consent to close the opening made, and to remove to the front of another commercial establishment. Thus, every business man of any property, along the entire street, was blackmailed, and the sum thus secured was nearly as large as the appropriation for the repair of the sewer. But not a stroke of really serviceable work was done.

After a suitable length of time had passed, and the inhabitants, but not the sewer, had been worked, a report was made to the Throne that the labor had been performed. An Imperial Commission was thereupon commanded to examine the sewer upon a specified day, and report. At the time named, the members of this body went, in great state and parade, to the upper end of the sewer, where, and in their presence, a man was lowered into it, with direction to pass through to the other end. Certainly, no more perfect test of thoroughness than this could be devised. The Commission went to the lower end, where, after a short delay, the man appeared. And the Emperor was informed, in due course, that the work had been thoroughly done. Such the report, but the facts were different. The sewer had been cleaned out for a distance of about twenty feet at each end. A man had been placed in hiding in the lower end, before the arrival of the Commis-

sion. Upon a secret signal, and having previously rubbed some dirt upon his dress, he appeared—when he was wanted. The man put into the upper end of the sewer remained there until the officials and crowd had gone, then quietly crept out and went home. The sum of money thus raised, half by theft and half by blackmail, was divided among several hundred people, in varying amounts. Probably a majority of the people in the city had more or less information of the gross fraud thus perpetrated. It could hardly be otherwise, as it was being carried on in open day for months. Yet nothing was said. And the only person who remained in absolute ignorance of the manner in which his commands were *not* being obeyed, but were being used to rob his subjects, was the Emperor.

It is impossible to excuse, or palliate, such wholesale robbery and fraud. And the question may well be raised whether, in a nation which permits and quietly overlooks the constant practice of similar injustice, there can remain any root of honesty, or any capacity for reform. That, first or last, the entire population of the empire appear to be, not merely complacent onlookers, but active participants in the robbery of the Treasury, only darkens the outlook and, apparently, destroys the prospect of any reform.

Yet, before accepting any such conclusion, it may be well to recall the laxity of conscience toward the government in other lands much nearer home, the extent to which Christian ladies and gentlemen of high character and eminent respectability defraud the revenue by smuggling, and rob at once the nation and their poorer neighbors, by denying ownership of property or understating its value, and all under the sanctity of an oath.

It may be accepted that, while fraud and corruption exist everywhere in China, the Peking cases, cited above, are extreme and do not represent, what may be termed, the just average of wrongdoing. If they were fair examples, the government would long since have gone out of existence. And there are many features in the Chinese character and their system of administration which, while not rendering wrongdoing less culpable, make reform far less hopeless.

The parental or family idea of government, which, as has often been said, lies at the root of their system, induces laxity of thought and action regarding public property. What belongs to the family may properly be taken by any member. Public property belongs to any one who thinks that he needs it, and may be appropriated to personal advantage without the commission of a



heinous offence. Again, officials being chosen from among the people, and every family in the empire having, or aiming to have, a relative among those who collect and disburse public funds, the whole business of administration, or maladministration, is in this way reduced to a sort of family affair. The people pay the money, and the people handle it. What more need be said? If a farmer in the province of Chihli suffers from the extortions of the tax collector, he excuses it, and comforts himself with the thought that his son, brother, or cousin, down in Hunan, also belongs to the official class and is filling his purse down there. In this way, all forms of extortion, injustice, and official or private wrongdoing are condoned and made light of, when they would not be endured for an hour, were it not for this family idea.

The Chinese have a wonderful, though indefinite, system of balances and adjustments. The writer once heard two men discussing, by the roadside, the results of their business for the day. They had each carried two baskets of cabbages into Peking, and peddled them through the streets. One had received five pieces of cash for each pound of his wares, while the other had received but four. But the latter remarked that he had tucked eight pounds of pebbles into the heads

of his cabbage, and hence had gained a few more cash than the first, for his day's work. With no invariable or generally recognized standards of weight or measure, with steelyard bars graded to buy with, upon one side, and to sell by, upon the other, neither being correct, with no system of coinage, with a perfectly indefinite unit of money, with silver bullion as the medium of exchange, of all grades, qualities, shapes, and sizes, it is simply astonishing to what extent all things are balanced up, all differences allowed for and adjusted in the accounting, and how little actual loss by fraud or deception occurs. One result of the lack of any standard in anything is, that every man is a sharp and close hand at a bargain.

And they equalize and average the more serious affairs of public service in much the same way that they employ in the petty details of private life. No attempt is made to secure that exact administration of each item of business which is looked for and, in a measure, secured in Western lands. If the general average is satisfactory, particular cases of misrule or abuse are not seriously considered. There is a far greater amount of individuality in the conduct of public or private affairs in China than is to be found elsewhere. The official adapts his acts and decisions to the particular person with whom he is

dealing. This cannot be termed even-handed justice, but it appears to satisfy the Chinese.

The writer was once placed where, for several days, he witnessed the proceedings and heard the conversation between a tax collector and the people of a district in which he was performing the duties of his office. Any proceedings more undignified and irregular could hardly be described. Threats, cajolery, earnest argument, and banter were by turns employed, and often upon the same person. The collector was as far removed from being an automatic limb of the law, the impersonal representative of an unvarying force and authority, as can be conceived. Judged by his remarks and conduct, he was possessed of full and final discretion to collect anything, or nothing, as he might see fit. And he manifestly gauged his conduct in each case by the person with whom he was dealing. In one instance, he would exact the last cash of the tax, with allowances for poor silver, additions for interest, expenses, commissions, and other charges, until the sum total represented several multiples of the original amount. In the next instance he would, perhaps, accept one-half of the tax due, while, in the next, he was entirely contented to receive nothing at all. And the victims, or victors, as the case might be, evidently understood it all, and were quite sat-

ified. There were no signs of rack or thumb-screw in the proceedings of the entire three days. They formed, rather, a prolonged contest of argument and powers of persuasion. Yet it must not be understood that all tax collectors in China perform their duties in the manner just described.

The system of individual responsibility, if it exists at all in the Chinese Empire, is not found in the organization of the central authority. The constitution of the Board of War, as heretofore described, is followed in all of the other departments. In each, the responsibility and authority are so far divided and subdivided, balanced and counter-balanced, that no one person is accountable for any act, and no individual member of the Board can do anything. Energy and honesty are wasted. Each official can hide behind every other, and thus evade question or criticism. Even the personal accountability of a viceroy is much less than is supposed. A complicated system of checks upon his action hinder his efforts in any direction, good or bad, and provide him, too, with abundant refuge under any storm of imperial or popular censure.

In the Chinese official system there is no such clean-cut partition of duties into different classes, and distribution of them among different men, as is found in Western nations. A civil officer has

various military functions to perform. The mayor of a city is liable, any day, to be ordered to assume command of an army corps or a battleship. And in the performance of his civil obligations, he is, by turns, a legislator, a judge, and an executive officer. There is this commingling and confusion of all the various lines of official work, to be found everywhere throughout China. The same authority makes the law, puts it into operation, and passes judgment upon those who fail to obey it.

The result is a peculiarly tangled system, which affords unlimited opportunities for corruption and arbitrary exactions of every sort. In Peking, where the same or a greater confusion of duties exists, it is by no means unusual to see one official holding a dozen different positions in all the various departments of public service. One result of which is, that a popular and efficient servant of the Throne is literally worked to death, while others, more inclined to indolence, do nothing. They pass their lives in a feeble effort to determine which, in the medley of duties assigned them, had best be attacked first. That public interests suffer, under such a system of confusion, goes without saying.

China is largely over-officered. In the government service, as everywhere else, there are more

hands than work. And this evil is continually increasing. The result is seen in a host of underpaid, and hence half-starved, petty public servants, whose only practical duty consists in inventing some occasion for exactions from the people. Crowds of them are to be found about every important public office, such as that of a viceroy or governor. And special commissions and unnecessary labors are invented and devised in order to furnish them with an excuse for continuing to live. The people are philosophic under such unreasonable burdens, largely for the reason already given, that these officers come from their own number, and having attained to such dignity, must be respected, honored, and—fed.

Most exaggerated notions are current in America and Europe regarding the wealth of Chinese officials. A few years ago a citizen of the United States, who had resided for years at Hong Kong, was appealed to by a newspaper reporter in New York for some information as to the wealth of a certain high Chinese official. In utter ignorance upon the point, he drew freely upon his imagination, and the result was somewhat startling. The viceroy referred to would doubtless consider himself rich beyond his wildest dreams if he possessed one-hundredth part of the fortune attributed to him. For many years the reputed wealthiest

person in Peking was an officer whose name has already appeared in these pages. And the highest estimate placed upon his possessions was considerably below one million dollars.

China is not the land of the enormously rich. However startling might be the sum total of the peculations from the public purse and the extortions from the people, throughout the empire, the great bulk of it all is divided in small sums among petty officials, underlings, and unofficial subordinates, on the spot, and at the time of collection, and, through them, flows back directly into the pockets of the people. Great wealth in China, as elsewhere, is found, not in the hands of officials, but of merchants and business men. Each officer of any grade in the service is obliged to maintain, at his own cost, a large staff of aides, secretaries, clerks, petty officers, messengers, and underlings of every kind. No government allowances of any sort are made for these adjuncts to his dignity and necessary assistants in the performance of his duty. Yet he is expected to retain a larger number of them than would be seen in a corresponding office in any other country. If they are deficient in number or in any of the thousand and one requirements which etiquette prescribes as necessary to such official attendants, he will surely suffer in dignity and respect paid him, and,

possibly, in more serious ways. If they rob the people, they rob their master no less. They are the active agents in all forms of official peculations, and much of the results of such theft and extortion never leave their hands. And, as has already been said, the large proportion of that which has been reported to their master is, at once, distributed among them. The post of gate-keeper, or porter, in a Chinese viceroy's palace is often, if not invariably, more profitable than the post of viceroy.

The salaries allowed to Chinese officials are merely nominal, seldom, if ever, sufficient to provide and maintain the staff above described. The annual legal salary of a viceroy is about \$500. A cabinet officer in Peking receives from \$1000 to \$1250 a year, upon which he is expected to maintain his family, his rank and dignity, and support his secretaries and a suitable staff, besides extending hospitality to guests. Of this sum, his salary, properly speaking, is \$250—the remainder is made up of special allowances. So a viceroy is granted additional sums which increase his total authorized income to about \$6000. But his inevitable expenses are far in excess of those of a cabinet minister, and cannot aggregate less than \$50,000 a year. As these are the highest officers in the empire, their pay is proportionately



greater. The salaries and allowances of lesser official grades decrease in ratio with the rank, until the district magistrate or mayor of a city and district having a population of half a million souls receives an annual sum, including salary and all allowances, considerably less than the earnings of a common laborer in the United States.

Among these allowances is one entitled the "anti-extortion fund." And the appropriation made from it, in some instances, has amounted to twenty, and even twenty-five, times the salary of the official recipient. Yet the total amounts received from all legitimate sources are insufficient for the requirements of any government position. The so-called extortions and peculations are the inevitable sequence to inadequate salaries. From this situation has come an understanding, everywhere recognized by the government, officials, and people of all classes, that those in office have a claim for compensation upon those whom they control and serve. The nominal salary and allowances represent only the Imperial portion of the amount due. The people of any district must, in turn, pay their share. So long as exactions made under this pretext are moderate, and the official duties are fairly rendered, no complaint is made.

The unwisdom of any such system is too plain to require comment. It opens a wide path to arbitrary and irresponsible administration, and to a general laxity in the construction of reciprocal duties and obligations, which can only end in the complete demoralization of the public service. If any officer is free to make a small demand, not recognized by law, upon a subject, to suit his requirements or desires, he will soon feel at liberty to make a larger one. If he is at liberty to reserve a small commission upon the taxes collected to pay him for his trouble, the amount being fixed by himself, he will speedily increase his share. Upon the other hand, if the people consent to pay more than legal taxes and imposts, at the demand of the official, they will soon discover their right to pay less, if it suits their necessities or convenience to do so. The inevitable result is what is seen to-day in China—hopeless confusion in the finances of the empire; an utter lack of any relationship between what the people actually pay in taxes and the sum which the government receives; more money raised and less available than is necessary. And, perhaps, the worst effect of the system is found in a public sentiment apparently so debauched, that no approach to dishonesty or corruption is seen in it, but it is stoutly defended as reasonable and business-like.

This liberty or license to tamper with private property upon the one hand, and the moneys of the empire upon the other, is the root of all the various forms of maladministration which have cursed China for many years. And the question at once arises whether a nation thus demoralized by ideas and practices, which have been working mischief for centuries, is capable of reform. Can there be any solid foundation left upon which to build? Is there enough of honesty and force of character left in the Chinese to enable them to correct these abuses, to establish and maintain a sound governmental system? Is there enough of cohesive power, enough of public and patriotic spirit, to be found in the race and nation to endure the inevitable strain of such sweeping changes as would be necessary?

There is no doubt in the minds of those who know China and the Chinese, that all such questions may safely be answered in the affirmative. Reference was made, in an earlier paragraph, to the extraordinary methods of balance and adjustment everywhere prevalent among the people. The improper and corruptive methods of supplementing official salaries, and of dealing, in general, with public funds, have been regarded by the great mass of the nation as processes of this sort, undesirable but necessary. And hence the

pernicious results have been much less than is generally believed. A great capacity of endurance and a philosophic turn of mind enable the average Chinaman to submit, with complacency, to conditions which he would gladly see modified, and even to excuse and defend wrong ways and methods, in the correction of which he would heartily assist. When the time comes, and reformative measures are put into operation in the empire, the facility and readiness with which they are adopted, and the appreciative support which they receive from the people, will surprise the world.

And yet it will not be strange to those who know them. The great majority of the Chinese are honest, acute men of business. They realize that their traditional systems of finance are extravagant, expensive, and corrupt. These have been endured, but not enjoyed. As merchants there are none better in the world than the Chinese, their word is as good as their bond, and their reliability and integrity are known and recognized by all who have had dealings with them. Honest and faithful in their dealings with each other, why should not such men welcome an honest governmental system, and aid in the establishment of it? What good reason is there for the assumption that they will not?

Industry, economy, patience, persistency of purpose, democracy of spirit, and stability—all of these most excellent traits of character are notably developed in the Chinese. Each one of them constitutes an argument in favor of their capacity for reform, and their ability to accomplish the much-needed task themselves. And their very conservatism, while leading them to caution in making changes, will ensure permanence to a new and better state of affairs.

It is impossible to believe that any race so multitudinous in number, possessed of a history continuous and consistent, which extends back to the very beginnings of recorded time, leaders for centuries in the civilization of the world, exhibiting at the present great intellectuality and an abundance of shrewd good sense, having such admirable and sturdy traits of character, such virility and force—it is impossible to believe that such a race is incompetent to manage its own affairs, and to plan and perfect any such reforms and readjustments of its domestic affairs and foreign relations as may be desirable or necessary.

The Chinese can and will accomplish this work. There is a large and growing body of able and intelligent men in the empire, some of whom have studied the more modern and better systems of

administration in Western lands, and all of whom see clearly the defects of the present government, and are determined upon their correction. The Chinese Educational Mission, already referred to, while not successful in the more immediate purpose of its creation, proved to be a training-school for much new thought upon Chinese affairs, and some of the boys who went abroad in 1872-75 will be among the leaders in the grave task of reforming and reconstructing a great nation. There is no lack of material, nor of intelligent, patriotic determination. Forces have been at work for many years which, even yet, have not shown themselves upon the surface. Men, springing from the ranks of the people, as all great leaders have come in the United States, will appear when needed, though their existence is still unknown. The power of public opinion, greater in China than elsewhere in the world, once aroused, will prove irresistible in favor of better things.

It is a matter of comparative indifference whether the necessary reforms are wrought out under the present Manchu dynasty or under some different régime. That question the nation should be allowed to determine for itself. The Manchus have become essentially Chinese, the work will be done by Chinese, who vastly out-

number the others, and have, for many years, been in practical control of the affairs of the empire. It would be exceedingly unwise, and possibly disastrous, for any foreign Power to interfere or offer advice in that question.

Unless prevented by force or disheartened by threats and an over-pressure of rival and conflicting interests, from without the empire, the leaders of Chinese thought will execute all needed reforms themselves, and with a single view to the advantage of the Chinese nation. And just here is danger of serious trouble. There are any number of elaborate schemes and plans for the reorganization of China in existence. The major part of them are of foreign origin. Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, philanthropic individuals, a few missionaries, and persons of varied description—as well as some who are nondescript—have all taken a hand in the enterprise. Oceans of advice, much of it good and much more impracticable, at least for the present, have been poured upon the heads of the rulers and people of the empire. All of this had a foreign or Western flavor, and hence, for reasons which this volume must have made quite evident, is discredited and distrusted by the Chinese. And much of it was, and is, liable to another and more serious objection—it rearranges and readjusts the

Imperial system and the laws for the benefit of the foreigner and foreign commerce. It proposes, in fact, the management of China for the advantage of Europe.

It is idle to expect that those who have intelligently at heart the good of their country, and a wise regard for its future, will consent to any such schemes and devices. Nothing short of force can accomplish them. In the future, China will either rule herself, and control her own affairs for her own good, as do other self-respecting nations, or she will cease to exist. Thanks to the recent uprising, the parting of the ways has come to this great empire. Henceforward, taking counsel from her near neighbor, China will gather herself together, call into exercise her enormous latent power, readjust herself to her own advantage, and take her place among the great nations of the world, not all at once, but gradually, or she will be dismembered, destroyed, and distributed about, piecemeal, among the Powers of Europe, to the shame of humanity and the destruction of the peace of the world. Whichever may happen, the Chinese are little likely to accept, unless under stress of arms, the schemes and devices of those who have debauched, humiliated, insulted, and robbed the empire in the past.



It is manifestly the part of wisdom to allow the Chinese to do their own work in their own way, at least until a disposition is shown to interfere with the manifest rights and privileges of foreigners. When advice is needed, they will hardly fail to seek it. A certain amount of pressure and semi-control will undoubtedly be called for, for a time at least. But it can best be exercised only with great tact, quietness, and discretion. They have a great store of suspicion, bitterness, and active hatred of all foreigners to eliminate from their thoughts and feelings. They attribute, and justly, many of their most serious ills to foreigners. And if they are to be given an opportunity to come into line with the rest of the world, and if the establishment of permanent relations with them upon a new and better basis is desirable, surely everything which may tend to perpetuate or renew former ill-will ought to be carefully avoided for the benefit of all.

It is not to be expected that the necessary reorganization of China can be effected without much delay, excitement, and irritation, and, possibly, bloodshed. If it could be done at once and without difficulty of any sort, then the inhabitants of the empire would prove themselves, in a new direction, to be the most remarkable race which has existed upon the earth in all time. For no

such stupendous work has ever yet been easily done, or done at all, without force and bloodshed.

The Chinese will prove no exception to the invariable experience of the past. And great patience, moderation, and a consistent slowness will be necessary in putting each particular reform into operation among the masses. The power of precedent, the natural inertia of the race, and a host of prejudices must be overcome or displaced. It is not easy for an old race to adapt itself to new conditions. And here is found an added argument against foreign interference. No matter how friendly, sympathetic, and experienced with the Chinese any Western man or government may be, none know well how to handle and control the Chinese but the Chinese themselves.

Even among reformers of their own nationality, so far as experience and observation may serve as a guide to judgment, there is great danger of too much speed and impatience. They wish to sweep away too many abuses and evils, and to initiate too many sweeping reforms, all in a day. Nothing but disaster can result from such indiscretion. A notable example of this is to be found in the action and experiences of the Emperor, Kuang Hsu, only two years ago. With the radical and ill-advised ideas of a child, he proposed to overturn and reconstruct the en-

tire fabric of Imperial administration within a few days, and by the easy process of issue of a sufficient number of paper edicts. He ordered everything that could be ordered, and all at once. He denounced and recast the entire system of literary examinations as a basis for the government service. This put the entire mass of literati throughout China in a fever of excitement and bitter hostility. By a single sweep of the "vermilion pencil," he threw out of existence six of the government departments, thus depriving more than six thousand officials of office and the means of support. Everything that China may acquire in a half century she was to have in a day. And the climax came with a report that a decree was about to be issued, requiring all the subjects of the Throne to cut off their queues and to adopt foreign modes of dress! The sequel to this insanity of reform is known to all the world. And the unfortunate young Emperor has not yet recovered his breath or his functions of state, lost through such extravagant exercise of Imperial energy. The old and wise saying: "It is better to be slow than sorry," is eminently appropriate to the inauguration of schemes, however wise, for the betterment of the Chinese administration.

It is not within the purpose of this volume to detail any plan of reorganization or reform. There are, however, certain preliminary steps which must be taken before the development of any system can be worked out, and those will be mentioned.

The first of these is the establishment of uniform and invariable systems of weights, measures, and coinage. The lack of these makes extortion and injustice easy. Variable ounce weights and variable standards of the purity of silver bullion, added to a varying value of silver in cash, which is the customary coin of payment, render it impossible that the taxpayer should ever know what is the exact legal amount of his indebtedness. But the urgent demand for such a preliminary measure of reform is too evident to require explanation. It matters little what measures, weights, and coinage are adopted, so long as any is ordered and rigidly enforced. Whatever would come most naturally to the people, and hence be most readily understood and accepted, would be the best. An Imperial Decree ordering the adoption of the system, and naming a date for its becoming of force sufficiently far in the future to enable all existing contracts affected by it to receive the necessary modification, would be

all the action required. And, under such a method, no hardship would fall upon a single inhabitant of the empire.

It hardly need be said that the second preliminary measure of reform must be the readjustment of the salaries and pay of all officials and public servants, of every grade and condition, upon a reasonable *living* basis, coupled with the prohibition, under the most severe penalties, of the receipt of any sums of money from the people. Honest service is impossible under any government which forces its servants to a choice between theft and starvation. And this is a fact which may well receive consideration from other Powers than the Chinese. This reform will be more difficult of accomplishment than the first, and will call for the exercise of extreme vigilance and stern determination. Yet it can be brought about. And when the masses of the people have come to a complete understanding of the new arrangement, and have learned by experience that they stand in no danger of trouble or injury when they resist illegal exactions or neglect to offer bribes, they will co-operate most heartily with the authorities. Yet it will require years of time to completely extinguish the old and vicious practices in this direction.

The last and yet most important, as well as

difficult, of these preliminary measures of reform has yet to be named. It consists in weeding out and removing from the official service of China every person who is a victim of the opium habit. This measure is as imperative as difficult. Difficult, because government offices throughout China reek with the fumes of the drug. Princes, viceroys, governors, judges, lesser civil officials of every rank, military and naval officers, all suffer under this vicious habit. It means the retirement to private life of a startling percentage of the entire official staff of the empire.

It is imperative, because honesty and efficiency of service and opium smoking are incompatible and contradictory terms. The two simply cannot exist in the same person. It is unsafe to rely upon the honesty of any man, or the purity of any woman, who is a victim to the opium habit. The early effects of the drug are the destruction of the moral sense and the power of accurate discrimination between right and wrong. These facts are well known, they are the same with every race. They are recognized and acted upon in private business. No man of affairs, in China or elsewhere, trusts an employé who is an opium smoker, and never employs such a person if any other is obtainable. Why should these facts be less true or less important in government posi-

tions, where the interests at stake are so much greater and the opportunities for close and frequent supervision so much less? An opium-smoking Buddhist priest has been known to steal the very gods from the altar, and pawn or sell them, for a supply of the drug. Will official victims of the same habit hesitate at crimes less serious than sacrilege?

It will be idle and useless for the Chinese authorities to attempt reform along any other lines, or the rectification of even the least abuse, so long as nothing is done to cleanse the public offices of opium fumes. The orders of governors, viceroys, of the Emperor himself, simply will not be obeyed. And when the government sets about thorough reorganization in good earnest, the first measure, and one vital to all which may follow, must be that indicated above. And it must be drastic and complete. Not merely responsible heads of departments, boards, and offices must be removed, but the lowest and most menial subordinates. It will not be safe to leave an opium-smoking door-tender or floor-sweeper in any public office.

It is manifest that the enforcement of any such measure of reform can only be begun after much thought and the elaboration of a wisely devised plan of operations. Cruel injustice and suffering

would inevitably result from any immediate and sweeping action in this direction. An official warning, extending over some two or three years, to the effect that persons still using the drug after the expiration of the limit of probation named, would be excluded from the public service, would probably be necessary. And years more would be required to completely eradicate the vice from all departments and offices of the administration.

Probably enough has been said of the part played by the self-styled "leading Christian Power of the world," in forcing this horrible curse upon the Chinese nation, for the sake of the enormous revenue derived from the traffic. It is humiliating to any one who has English blood in his veins to recall the facts, and to discover that the British Government is loudest and most imperative in the demand for reforms, while that government is, in the main, alone responsible for fastening a vice upon China which renders any reform difficult to the verge of impossibility.

The real Chinese question is the question of the continued existence of the Chinese nation. While, in one phase, it is a question between modern progress and antique conservatism, between B.C. 500 and A.D. 1900, so many complications



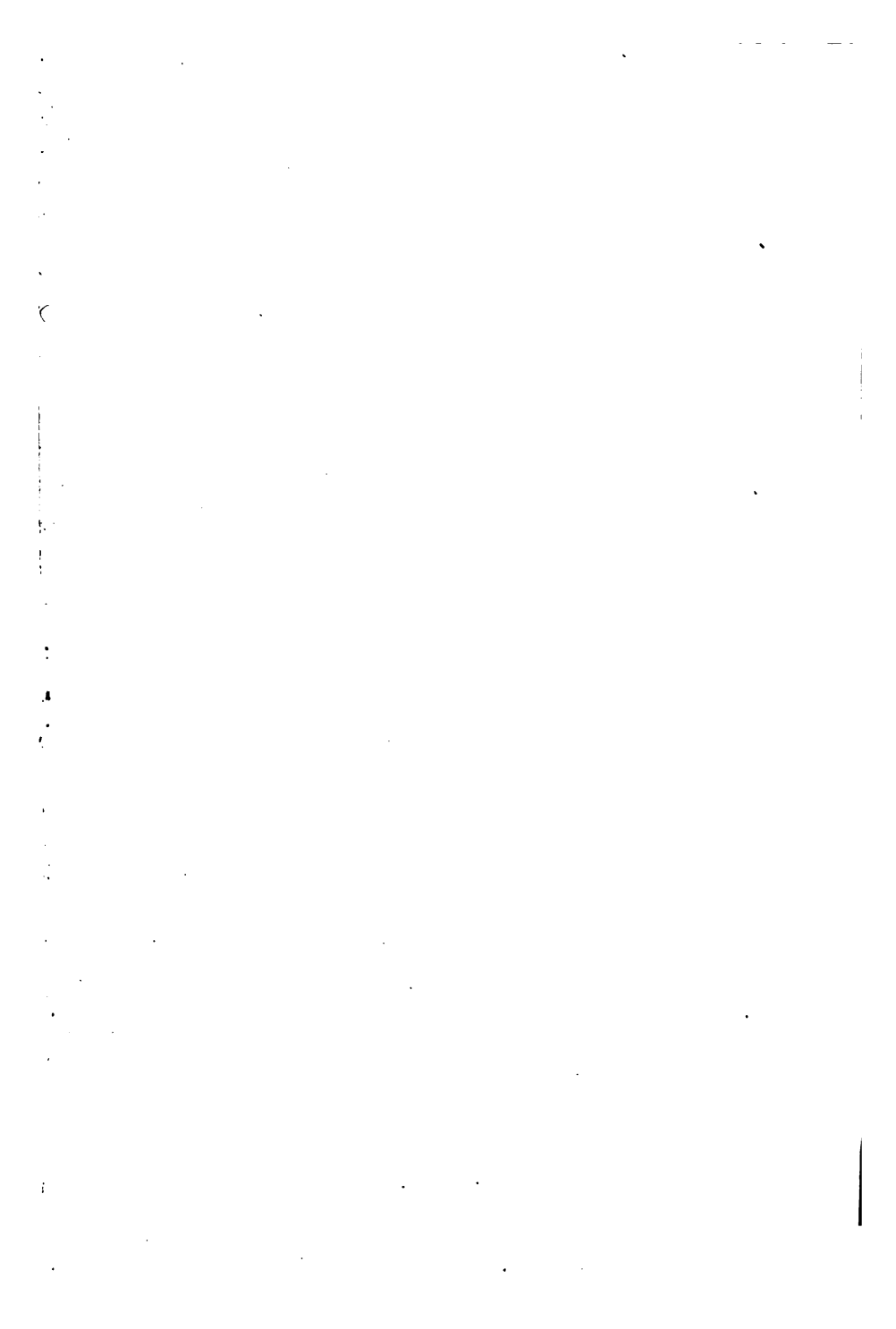
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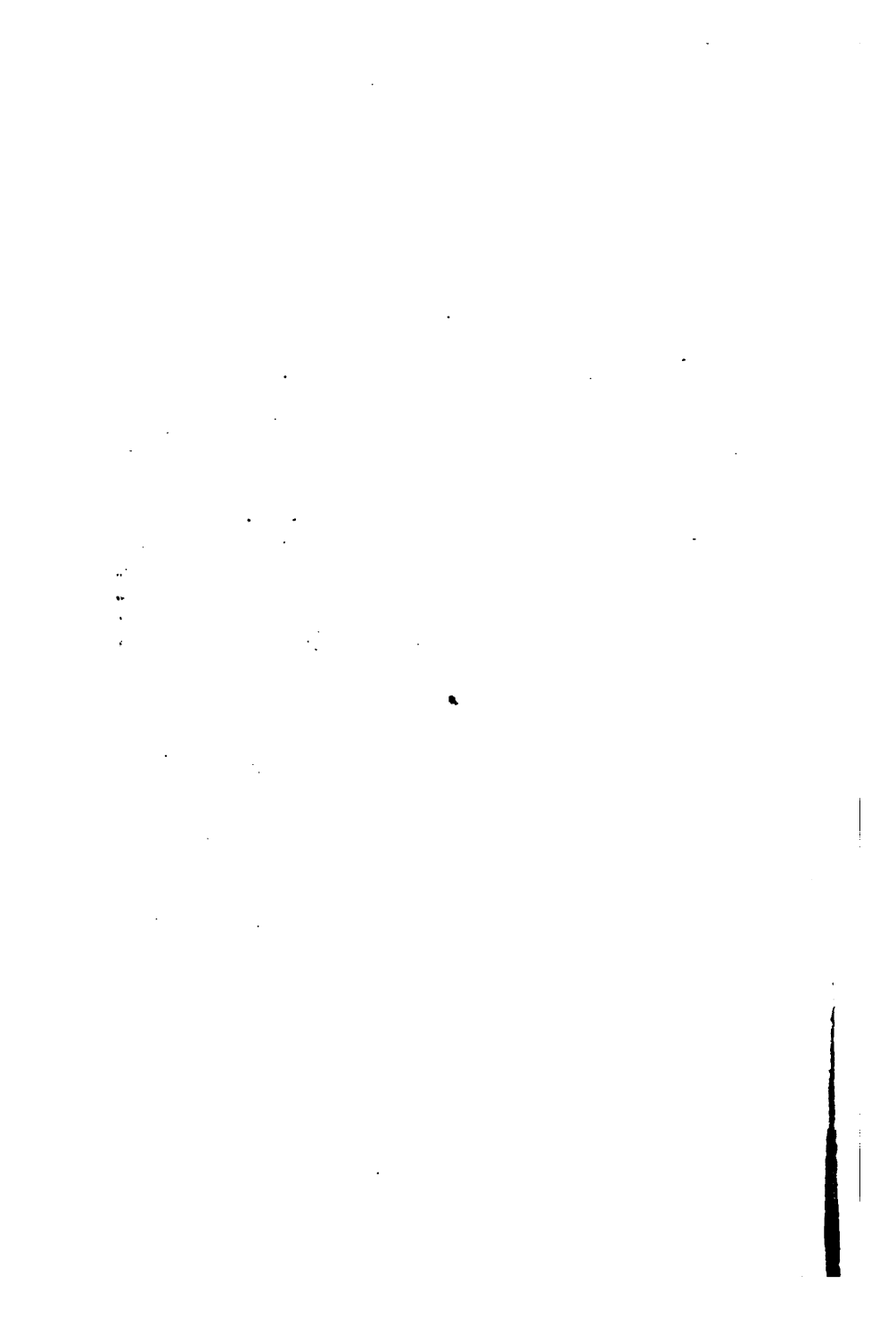
**386 REAL CHINESE QUESTION**

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and issues, exterior to the nation, are involved, so many other interests are at stake, that, in making a choice, if any opportunity for choice is permitted, China decides between life and death.

Left largely to herself, encouraged where encouragement is necessary, warned and guided at times in any kindly and friendly way, and helped to help herself, there can be no doubt as to the result. In the interests of a common humanity, and in wise regard for the lower, but seemingly more important concerns of trade and commerce, it is much to be hoped that such a line of policy may be adopted toward the Chinese Empire in the future.





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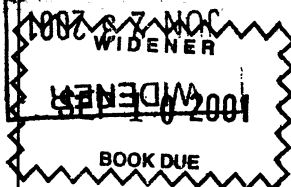
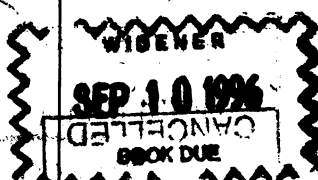
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